

COMMENTARY

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From the American Scene—

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On the Contemplative Life

The Study of Man

Liberating the Social Scientist

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David Riesman

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Sherry Mangan

The French Jews, now one of the largest communities in Europe, have made enormous strides in reconstituting their communal institutions and economic life, Mr. Mangan reports. But, though the old plague of intellectual anti-Semitism has almost been wiped out, the menace of popular anti-Semitism grows more serious the longer France fails to find a way out of its demoralizing political and economic impasse.

Pages from an Autobiography

Morris R. Cohen

The late Professor Cohen—a great and greatly loved teacher, and one of the foremost figures in modern American philosophy—writes of his deep relationship to the traditions and life of the Jews.

Munich University: 1947

J. Glenn Gray

Most now understand that the democratic reconstruction of Germany—a task of fearful import for the future of Europe and the world—must depend in the final analysis on what is now taking place in the mind and spirit of Germany's youth. An American educator, recently returned after a year as control officer at Munich University, describes the prevailing moods of German students and examines the difficulties of present-day German education.

COMMENTARY

EMANCIPATION IS INDIVISIBLE

Western Civilization and Its Jews Must Save Themselves Together

FRANÇOIS BONDY

IT IS inevitable that the political question of finding a home for Europe's displaced Jews should claim the center of discussion. But it is also important—in the face of the general collapse of European culture and its hesitant, lethargic recovery—to raise the question of the moral and cultural value of

the Jew to modern society. Indeed, it might be valuable to deal with both questions together. Often it happens that when two broad, indefinite ideas strike against one another, the collision throws off the spark of a single precise insight. . . .

There is a more serious and almost self-evident justification for treating the spiritual and political questions together: in the modern world, the separation of spiritual values from the contingencies of *Realpolitik* and economics has become impossible.

Through the ages, cultural life was able to survive along the margins of despotism, in the courts of the nobility, as censor, satire, tolerated opposition, ornament. In 18th-century Germany it was able to exist as a sort of humanism in a small, strange world, in which each citizen pretended to be a denizen of Mt. Olympus at the cost of renouncing all part in the social and political life outside. In fact, it is possible to trace, throughout the Christian era, the recoil of enlightened groups as they periodically withdrew from the harsh realities of the political and social life of their times. Such was the attitude of the hermits of the Diocletian period who sought refuge in the desert, sustained only by their mystic vision of a wondrous world. In its own way, this was also the attitude of Montaigne, who, while neither mystic nor visionary, gave up all his social

TO MANY Jewish thinkers, the events of the decade leading up to World War II, and the continuing dim perspective of the postwar years, spell the utter collapse of Jewish emancipation, and the hopelessness of any decent future for the Jews in Europe. Even those not so defeatist can hardly avoid re-examining the whole course of modern Jewish history with a view to discovering the roots of the catastrophe, and charting a sounder basis for Jewish freedom and survival in Western civilization. With uncommon insight and imagination, FRANÇOIS BONDY here sketches, it seems to us, a most illuminating approach to this whole problem, moreover stressing reciprocal interplay and integration rather than flight. M. Bondy was born in Berlin in 1915 of Swiss parents, and educated in Switzerland and France, receiving his *Licence ès Lettres* from the University of Zurich. At the beginning of the war, he was interned in the French concentration camp at du Vernet and later worked as a journalist in close contact with the resistance movements. He has contributed articles to many Continental and English periodicals, and is at present literary and art editor of the Swiss weekly, *Die Weltwoche*. This article has been translated from the French by Walter Goldwater.

responsibilities in order to isolate himself in his castle, surrounded by the classics, closing his eyes to the grim spectacle of the religious wars, barricading himself behind his scepticism and his teaching of tolerance. The experience of his maternal ancestors, who were Marranos, secret Jews, doubtless contributed to his feeling about tolerance; indeed, through Montaigne this experience entered by a devious route into the consciousness of Western Europe and became part and parcel of its substance. The neo-classic world of Goethe, Schiller, and Humboldt, as well as the lyrical world of the German romantic musicians and poets, was also a refuge and an escape. The inner life of the creative artist flourished only on the fringe of political reality, when it was not in rebellion against it.

Now, can we not compare this proud but modest existence—suppressed yet sullenly rebellious, a culture on the outskirts of political reality—with the Jewish ghettos that existed on the outskirts of the great European national communities from the Middle Ages right down to the middle of the 19th century? There, too, was an inner life, a complete religious, cultural, and mystical world nourished by its own traditions, just as humanism and its preachers were nourished by Greek and Latin culture. There, too, were insulated communities that could influence and be influenced by the outer world only by tortuous paths and with the greatest of difficulty. The dwellers in the ghetto gave little thought to the possibility of playing any real part in the life of the world around them; revolts, wars, and invasions affected them only indirectly and, as it were, by ricochet. In exactly the same way, the cultural elite of the Christian world usually made no attempt to impregnate social and political reality with their humanistic ideas, except through writings about Utopian societies—the counterpart of the messianic dream of the Jew—that made no concrete proposal for the conversion of the world as it was into the world as they wished it to be.

The parallel between the history of West-

ern culture and the history of Judaism was neither accidental nor temporary and has endured to the present day: each one soared to the same heights, suffered the same crises, has undergone the same catastrophes. In effect, the emergence of the Jews from their physical ghetto kept pace with the emergence of cultural life from its own ghetto—a more pleasant one, it is true, but not less real. The French Revolution represented the fusion, incomplete but full of vitality, of this tiny world of culture—of the salons, studios, coteries, and Utopias—with the greater world of a new political reality, a world in which the masses were stirring, and in which the whole of Europe would soon be encompassed. In 1848 came the second great blow for emancipation, delivered as much for the intellectuals in general as for the Jews in particular, and additional segments of the semi-feudal world crumbled. Finally, far to the East, in Russia, the Revolution of 1917 accomplished, tardily but with so much more *Gründlichkeit*, the removal of the ghettos both physical and cultural.

LET us stop at this crucial year, 1917-1918. It marks the collapse of the last of the empires basically absolutist, bureaucratic, or semi-feudal: Turkey, Czarist Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany. It marks the completion of the work of the French Revolution, the establishment of democracy, equality before the law, total emancipation, and the end of the ghetto.

In Czechoslovakia, a philosopher, Masaryk, becomes head of the state. In Germany, an assimilated Jew, the great industrialist and tormented thinker, Walter Rathenau, is to direct foreign policy. In Russia it is still the heyday of the revolutionary intelligentsia, in part Jewish, the Trotskys and Zinovievs—the day of Litvinov, the League of Nations, and Léon Blum is still to come.

Let us never forget that all those liberties for which the European underground fought in the war just past, and which all the people of Europe today struggle to regain, were once well known to Europe. The Jews of all Europe were able to come and go,

free of any legal restraint. Their intellectual elite was able to play to the full its role, often a considerable one, in economic, scientific, technical, literary, and political life. Further, during this short period every Jew was able to make his own individual personal decision—to become part of the capitalist world or of the socialist world, to support the chauvinists, or even to seek a Jewish nationalism of his own in Zionism.

Among the Jews who contributed in many different ways toward the creating of this epoch of liberalism and progress, outstanding were Marx, Disraeli, Bergson, Einstein, and Freud. To link such names as these may seem strange and arbitrary, but it is characteristic of all problems touching assimilated Judaism that any common denominator will appear absurd, any linking of names and tendencies artificial. By here naming a revolutionary, a conservative, a philosopher, a scientist, a psychoanalyst, I mean to show the very diverse domains in which the Jews were able to contribute to modern intellectual and political life. It is not a question of claiming—it is unnecessary to insist on this point—that international socialism, modern British imperialism, idealist metaphysics, relativity, and psychoanalysis were the work of these five men. These theories, these actualities, would all have come into existence even if these men had not lived. But that is not the question.

The fact remains that it was through them and others that the Jewish spirit—what might be described as a Jewish *forma mentis*—was able to help to bring into being these actualities, was able to crystallize these ideas; and this same spirit gave to these creations a stamp which, among many other tendencies, bears the imprint of the Jewish spirit, of the historic experiences and modern needs of Judaism. In all these fields, these Jews—as they strove to extend the breakdown of their ghetto—simultaneously played decisive roles in movements which tended to shatter the airtight compartments of Western civilization. In the infinitely complex process of this larger emancipation of Western man, this Judaistic common denominator is, I

think, one of the essential factors; and it is one of the elements necessary to a proper understanding of the problem of the interpenetration between the Jewish and the Western spirits. Thus the tolerance of Montaigne marks but a first meeting point between two historical experiences, two cultural necessities.

But to return to the five men of Jewish origin who helped to create the intellectual and political framework of the world of 1918. In the first place Marx, with his prophetic messianic mind, searching for social justice, employing a strict and abstract dialectic, while turning his back on specifically Jewish problems brought into the Western world a way of thinking, an aspiration which I would call almost Biblical. Consider how he prophesied the inevitable, apocalyptic collapse of a world devoted to the cult of the golden calf, worshiping the material wealth which in itself it despises—and which is a vision so familiar to the ancient prophets. Consider his messianism without a messiah, which designated a social class—the proletariat—as saviour. Consider, above all, that in his early works this vision antedated the structure flung up by scientific thought, and that his materialism was steeped through and through with a troubled, religious spirituality, and with a truly ethical aim.

Disraeli, Prime Minister to her Majesty Queen Victoria, who made her Empress of India and realized in his foreign policy the wild dreams of his early novels. This was the Disraeli who at Berlin got the better of Bismarck, and became a conservative disguised as a political reformer. He was one of the great builders of the British Empire, which with all its faults, weaknesses, and inconsistencies has remained to this very day one of the most solid institutions of the modern world.

Two generations later, Bergson, almost lyrical originator of a metaphysics of the spirit which was, in his last great work, to contrast the open society with the closed society, therewith presenting us with one of the capital problems of our day.

Einstein, who freed scientific thought from the dogmatic materialism of Newton—already weakened though it may have been—by his general theory of relativity; who shattered the accepted notion of the privileged position of time and space, just as in the political sphere was shattered the notion of privileged men and classes.

Freud finally, who descended into the lower depths of our industrial society, who wished to extend science and logic even into the dream. Without going back as far as Joseph in the science of dreams, we may observe that the method of rationalizing and bringing out into the open even what is most personal to the subconscious is closely akin to the technique of Talmudic dialectics.

In these ways various Jews, thoroughly integrated into the culture of Western Europe, have contributed to raising the frame of a more rational, more equitable, and perhaps a freer society. Even in physics and metaphysics, this great movement destroyed the barriers of ghettos both literal and figurative, burst through absolute space and time, through the closed society, ruptured the screen between the conscious mind and that subconscious area which had hitherto been excluded from spiritual reality.

BUT this world, more rational and democratic than any before it, which after a long period of gestation finally came into being in 1918, crumbled almost immediately. It fell into political, social, and economic turmoil, and proved to be every bit as incapable of solving its problems as all the less emancipated and less enlightened societies preceding it. Undermined by a sort of creeping paralysis, it fell prey to a violent attack on the part of all those forces which it believed to have mastered or permanently abolished.

The one system which, for better or worse, did resolve these problems—the new Soviet system—did so by rejecting the complicated machinery of democracy, parliamentarianism, individual liberties, and freedom of thought. It acted through the dictatorship of a small revolutionary elite, who between 1934 and

1938 were destroyed to be replaced not by a "Thermidorian" liberal bourgeoisie, but by a new absolutist state, which still continues to solve the main problems of the group, but cares naught for either spiritual or civil liberties. If this was to be the fate of the Russian people, which, having passed through profound crises, faced up relatively well to its problems, and which at least abolished national oppressions, ghettos and pogroms, the West was to meet a destiny still more tragic. In Italy it was fascism, while in other countries it was a series of dictatorships, semi-fascist and reactionary regimes from Poland to the Balkans and Spain. It was also the death, less by assassination than by suicide, by internal decomposition, of the German Republic, Austria, even France.

The fact is that the religion of progress which for two centuries had been the religion of the majority of thinking people, and particularly of all the assimilated Jews who saw before them a future of uninterrupted ascent, suffered one severe blow after another. Just compare the slow rise and the tedious maturation of all the religious, civil, national, and social liberties from 1789 to 1918, with the brusque and total destruction of their bases from the moment when, instead of being the fount of opposition, they came to constitute the very source of statist power itself. An extreme generalization, one might object; yet this internal crisis of the new republics was not merely the crisis of the German Republic and its democratic parties, not only the failure of the more resistant and better directed tiny Austrian Republic. In almost all of Eastern Europe we observe in different degrees this incapacity of the new elite, democratic or socialist, to create new forms of government and of communal life. Everywhere, even before the hostile forces inflicted a defeat upon them, we see among these elites an internal abandonment and renunciation of democratic values, as if they themselves were not convinced that those values were good enough to govern by. We have only to think of the nationalist auction sale of 1932 in Germany, in which the left wing parties tried to com-

pete with Nazism. In France, the political and social crisis of democracy came later; as a victorious nation which had held on to the normal state forms, France did not enter its crisis until the advent of the Popular Front, which corresponded to the socialist phase of the German Republic. But basically her evolution was no different.

ONE of the fundamental causes of this bankruptcy of the principal continental democracies may be seen in the fact that they were incapable of realizing that democracy can develop properly only in a supranational democratic milieu, and never in the restrictive framework of absolute national sovereignty. For all the major problems of Europe overstep this framework, can find no satisfactory solution within it. The first submission to the fact of sovereignty contained the germs of all future defeats. But it was not the sole causal agent; the crisis of liberty went still deeper.

Let us consider, for the moment, all those confident hopes that the majority of Jews had placed in this course of progress—some united in their confidence in bourgeois progress, others in that socialist progress which is at bottom only the consequence and continuation of the movement for civic emancipation initiated on all levels by the bourgeoisie. Let us face, if we have the strength and imagination to do so, what, after twenty-four years, happened to this naive optimism, this faith in progress, this very Europe, so free, intelligent, appreciative of all spiritual values—with its Jewish values now intermingled with the work of other thinkers and protagonists of the West.

It is certainly no longer the hour for prophets of good tidings, but the hour of the true prophets, of Jeremiah, of Micah:

And the prophets thereof divine for money;

Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say:

*"Is not the Lord in the midst of us?
No evil can come upon us."*

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be

*plowed as a field,
And Jerusalem shall become heaps,
And the mountain of the house as the
high places of a forest.*

It is the hour of Ezekiel who prophesied countless whitened bones, for a great stink of ill-buried corpses still rises over Europe, and where life does go on the ghettos are seen rising once again.

But we must not limit ourselves to looking at the fate of the Jews, most tragic of all; we must see how, on every side, there are being re-established those same buttressed citadels that our fathers thought destroyed; how culture has been subdivided into intellectual specializations, scientific, technical, narrow; how the sorely wounded nations have withdrawn into themselves and nurture a national pride proportionate to the humiliation they have undergone. See how the world of victorious reason has so easily given way to unreasonable and illogical myths, while rationalism and humanism are denounced in their turn as myths without substance as against the "realities" of race and infallible intuitions. It is still and again *the common disaster of Western culture and Judaism*, always bound together.

But let us not halt at apocalyptic visions, at the terrifying irony of history; let us try to think it out in spite of all this, faithful to the spirit of Spinoza, "Not to laugh, not to weep, but to understand."

LET us try to explain the collapse—temporary, perhaps, but so thorough—of all those values of progress, of civilization. The first thing we see is that the evil is still somewhat circumscribed: it has to do with a specifically European and, more specifically, a German catastrophe. The Anglo-Saxon world in its internal social and cultural structure has been spared it. The torments in which writhe the Asiatic world, China, and India, are bound up in part with other values and other immediate problems. The tragedy of Judaism coincides with the tragedy of the collapse of freedom on the European continent, just as the progress of Judaism was

bound up with the achievement of a more liberal society in Europe.

But first we must recognize that this close connection between the fate of Judaism and the fate of European liberty does not dispense with our obligation to see or pose *the specific problem* of Judaism.

It is a great error, and one too often made, to believe that it will suffice to solve such-and-such a great problem of a world economy, for instance, or of international political organization, for all problems, including "the Jewish problem," immediately to be solved "automatically." Problems hardly ever are solved automatically. Great problems can be solved only through the patient solution of a whole series of minor special problems, as well as by the *general attitude* taken toward all these "special" cases. We must understand *at the same time* the special Jewish problem and its context, the situation in which it comes up. Also we must appreciate at the same time to what extent it comes up for reasons which have specifically to do with Judaism per se, and to what extent as a by-product or derivative of other problems of the surrounding world. These two aspects, the tragedy of the non-Jewish world and the inner tragedy of the Jewish world, are inextricably intertwined. Nevertheless, they must be temporarily separated to be understood.

Just what was it that went awry in our conceptions of liberty to make possible such a disaster? We must also inquire into just what motive has placed the Jewish question at the center of the catastrophe; just why Judaism has been chosen as the sacrificial goat; just why, in totalitarian eyes, it has represented, according to the needs of the moment, plutocracy, political liberalism, socialism, the "Jew-dominated" Vatican, the "Jew-infested" Hapsburg dynasty, and so on.

Perhaps we have not sufficiently emphasized how violently Judaism, from the time of its emancipation, plunged into the movements of intellectual, social, and cultural advance. But it is never *Judaism as such*, with its feeling of community and solidarity, of its own particular ideas, which has mani-

fested itself in Western Europe; it is always individual Jews, hundreds of thousands of Jews, yet "individual cases," particularly in their own eyes. In the artificially segregated community of the ghetto there came an explosion, an eruption out of its stifling world. Individuals burst the bonds of their unbearably backward and narrow past, and tried to penetrate into a new community. It often happened that they remained in a state of disequilibrium between the two communities, and thereby supplied a type which Europe was later to supply in great numbers: the *uprooted individual*, dependent on his own intelligence or resourcefulness. This disequilibrium was sharpened by the fact that the very society toward which the Jews were turning was itself in growing internal disequilibrium.

IN CONTEMPORARY European society, which is itself on the road to disintegration into a fine spray of individuals, Jewish assimilation too often signified the loss of that sense of community which is the responsibility toward a group, the total and indefinable commitment of man to those values which transcend his individual destiny.

Detached from this uniting force of the community, the special historical attributes of the Jewish spirit—even its deepest values, its Messianic quest, its thirst for complete social justice, its prophetic universalism, and still more the shortcomings bequeathed to it by centuries of the ghetto—have had explosive force, a force which in a certain sense has been a force of decomposition. I do not hesitate to use this term, so dear to Hitler's propaganda. For it is vital to face the fact that the great strength of the Nazi lies precisely in the partial truths included in them. It was decomposition in the sense that it tended to carry to its final conclusions the movement of the bourgeois world toward atomization, toward individualism (which should be sharply distinguished from "personalism"), and in the direction of an "absolute progress" in which we desired only too strongly to dissolve the specific Jewish problem and see it vanish.

Nevertheless, Judaism showed itself plainly in all the individualities of the assimilated Jews, if not consciously at least as a sort of feeling of remorse. If we may burden the past with our retrospective intentions, instead of remaining halfway between two forms of community the Jews might better have taken full cognizance of their ambivalent situation and dual responsibility. In itself, in a "normal" contemporary society the belonging to two or more circles, the multiplicity of attachments—political, religious, or cultural—is not at all abnormal; it is even the rule. It is as absurd to speak today of an antithesis or conflict between a Jew and a Frenchman as it is to pose to a Frenchman the alternative of good unionist or good patriot, or to a German Catholic the alternative of true believer or true citizen. The *multiplicity of differing connections* in which the political, the religious, the national, the cultural do not precisely coincide, is the most important characteristic of a free society; it is one of the conditions of liberty and of the development of the integrated personality.

It is times of crisis that give birth to those alternatives: patriot or internationalist, true believer or true citizen, Jew or German, and the like. But it is impossible to transcend the crisis without at the same time transcending those sharp alternatives to which it gave birth, and understanding *why* those alternatives were posed and why that "complexity" which is not normally noticed as such, was forced to give way to simplifications which are more and more radical, arbitrary, and in the long run unrealizable.

THIS "why" leads us to the general causes of the crisis itself and to the crucial year 1917-18, which, even more than the year 1914 or the year 1939, marks its high point.

A preliminary remark, and important enough to excuse its banality: a value or an idea is never good or bad, useful or harmful, in itself. Everything depends on the whole system with which it is connected, and on the place it has in this system. Thus, those values of liberty—considered negatively

as simply an absence of annoying hindrances—which the movement of liberal and secular culture succeeded in achieving, and in the establishment of which the Jews had a certain definite part, could rapidly and completely *change into their opposites* because they were *isolated*: they were values of individuals, of economic units, of national units; they were not bound up with the values of any new great human community, with responsibility toward society as a whole.

This is the reason why these economic and political liberties were victims of their own success. The rights of individuals, programs of national autonomy were excellent *programs of opposition* when it was a question of making the absolutist state forms more flexible. But in themselves they did not constitute more viable forms; they did not constitute a living society.

When the great problem of order, of unity of the group, is already more or less solved by existing state forms, we may speak of liberty in the singular, and liberties in the plural. But when for liberals, or for those socialists who are only left-liberals, it is a question of actually governing, then the values of opposition programs are not enough. True, one does not live by bread alone, but as Whitehead has said of the century of Enlightenment, one lives still less by disinterestedness alone, by critical sense, by reason.

The European tragedy was that after 1918, after the collapse of the imperial states, people had to govern who had never seriously thought about the great problem of state order, of hierarchy, of values, of responsibilities in the social order and to the social order, of the difficulties of imposing an idea, not as one would hope to, in a Utopian way, at one stroke and by a great overturn, but day by day, with infinite patience and persistence in a stubborn, real world. In this supreme test of idealism—i.e., power—it was precisely the Utopians and the ideologists who, finding no connection between their ideas and the astonishing realities, fell back most quickly into routine, and held on to those principles, even to those functionaries and to the functioning of the government apparatus left by

their predecessors, which were most outdated.

This is a generalization which will perhaps seem exaggerated, but is it really so? For the Europe of 1918, the "Wilsonian religion" represented the hope of millions of men directed upon the American president who bore a message of justice and liberty. But Wilsonism—and Wilson himself, who was the first sincere convert to Wilsonism—ran askew all along the line. Faced with covetousness, hatred, rancor, secret treaties, the whole European "climate," Wilson—the author of erudite works on law—soon was forced to capitulate. He thought that the truths he bore were so strong and convincing that it would be necessary only for him to appear and to speak, and everyone would be carried away and persuaded. The realism of Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Venizelos, and Benes took him completely by surprise. And before this realism, so complex and so resistant, his idealism collapsed. He was indeed an intellectual for whom the world of the university and books had constituted a ghetto, and who was never able to reconcile his beautiful thoughts with grim political realities.

In the bosom of the European republics, the same tragedy was repeated in miniature: the tragedy of Masaryk who, although head of a state, was unable to influence the politics of the minorities; the tragedy also of Léon Blum, who like Wilson was uplifted by the great faith of the masses and left behind him the memory of a great disillusionment, knowing neither how to reconcile his programs with actualities, nor how to leave the arena in proper time, and thus exposing his failure to all eyes. The great fault with these minds arose from the fact that apparent power and real power turned out to be different things, and that while these men of the party seemed to govern, actually they were at the mercy of circumstances and did not govern anything at all.

Among the democrats there was at the same time too much and too little idealism, just as in the new Europe there was too much and too little liberty. What was needed

was an idealism which was more realistic, a liberalism more conscious of the great problems of power and of the social framework that liberty needs—the framework which harmonizes rights and duties, which proportions liberties to responsibilities.

These newcomers were ignorant of the fact that the Anglo-Saxon world—the model of continental democracy—is united by a national group consciousness so strong that it has no need to affirm it in speeches; it is united through a thousand invisible bonds—cultural, religious, communal, federal—by institutions which form a counterpoise to "total" liberalism, and to individual atomization. Continental Europe had merely beaten down all the obstacles, all the barriers to progress, and in their place installed the *anarchy of nations*, large and small, which would not submit to the discipline of a supra-national rule; the *anarchy of great economic groups* which would not submit to the needs of society as a whole, but solely to the laws of a free market which they perverted inevitably by their own trusts and cartels; the *anarchy of different social groups* within the nations themselves, all leaning towards a strong State which would protect their profits, take care of their losses, or guarantee them work or a protective tariff.

THIS individualism of groups within Europe itself—nations, trusts, parties—was the consequence of the erroneous exaggeration of the idea of individualism beyond immediate human reality; and even there it could make sense only against a background of strong bonds, duties, responsibilities, and agreements. It was the anarchy produced by a surfeit of irresponsible individualism—without a sense of proportion or scale of values, without faith in an objective truth which alone is able to uphold such a scale of values—that has produced or called forth reaction. To liberty without an idea of order, we saw counterposed a system of order without an idea of liberty; to the scattering of wills into millions of atoms, we saw in reply the grouping of millions of atoms around a single will; and to logical reason without

any social dynamic we saw a social dynamic without logical rationale.

The Jews found themselves in the bloody center of this catastrophe, owing both to the strength and weakness in the character of European Jewish society. Since they were the last to be emancipated, tradition was still strong enough so that they were the first ones to find their position destroyed.

The Jews had been thoroughly involved in that movement for emancipation and liberalism which led to—or at least was unable to prevent—a deep social crisis. And so when the time came that liberty began to seem to the great masses of people as nothing more than a tendency toward social disintegration, as a world of material insecurity and intellectual anarchy, the Jews—who had put all their own values and their energy at the service of this very liberty—were inevitably compromised. For too long they had been preaching the gospel of progress for the priests of the new mythology not to recognize in them their most obvious and vulnerable antagonists. And at the same time attacks also began to be made against some of the traditional Judaic values which many, indeed, most of the Jews of Western Europe, had wanted to ignore. So ironically, in spite of themselves, they became martyrs to ideas which had passed them by and which they scarcely even understood.

Just what values are these? First, there is the spirit of *collective solidarity* with the group to which the individual is responsible and which in turn feels responsible to the individual. Although the majority of the Jews disclaim this collective destiny, it still exists and is strongly enough resented by the non-Jewish world so that it takes on—precisely because of its unavowed presence—the *appearance of a conspiracy*. But in the long run, whether it is understood or not, this kind of solidarity within a human community is a positive value, a counterpart of any freedom we can imagine—though it be affirmed only in common persecution and in common graves, instead of being a solidarity freely assumed and aggressive, as it was so

gloriously in April, 1943, behind the last barricades in the Warsaw ghetto.

The second Jewish value is the urge towards a *supra-national framework* for modern political, economic, and cultural life. The Jews are the incarnation of such a supra-nationalism. They have made it felt above all by the presence in every country of the same irritating Jewish problem, and by that same solidarity of Jewish destiny, manifested so clearly in times of crisis. In so far as the Jews have aspired toward a more international society which would dissolve, after so many other ghettos, the ghetto which is the modern state, they expressed a need which they had in common with modern culture and with all the fundamental demands of present-day spiritual and material life. Here again is a community of interest between modern culture and Judaism which is neither a coincidence nor a surprising parallel, but only a plain demonstration that the true values of human dignity are always bound up together, and that a society which does not have room for *all* dignities and liberties will in the long run not have room for *any*.

Thus it is that the very presence of the Jews, their shifting about, the waves of immigration from Galicia, maintained—in spite of the wishes of the assimilated Jews, always more or less anti-Semitic with regard to the Jews from countries further East than their own—the *supra-national* aspect of the Jewish question. At a time when Europe was withdrawing into absolute nationalism, and was rejecting those international values which the peoples had no idea how to put to use—since no actual supra-national *structure* was present to concretize and support them—at that moment the Jews became a source of worry and uneasiness. Whether they liked it or not, they represented an embodiment of supra-nationalism, and constituted a problem in international law.

SO WE can see that it is for profound reasons, and by no mere accidental mischance, that Judaism has had to play its role of victim and of “crystallization point” of

hatreds and disorders. At bottom it symbolized, nay, more, it was the incarnation of the exasperating *complexity* of the world's problems in the face of the great, rude simplifications for which the masses thirst. The Jews have been thrown across history like a dike to raise the sea-level, as Léon Bloy has said so magnificently. This great truth is now only manifest through its contrary, since history, in order to lower its level, has demolished and laid low the dike.

Thus the Jews have been witnesses and martyrs, but they have often failed to realize which God they were serving through their suffering and humiliation. It is only through this suffering that the sense of history becomes sharpened, and that the consciousness of true values and their hierarchy is created. That sense of responsibility which goes beyond the individual, the sense of justice, the prophetic sense of the insufficiency of all the petty values of narrow and exclusive nationalism—those ideas which the prophets preached against the materialism of the kings of Israel and have been part of the fate of the people of Israel itself—these are the values with which we must renew our ties. In the necessity for a kind of federated Euro-

pean community in a world where international law has been established; in the framework of a community of great duties, of rights which are limited but which are the same for all, and of total responsibility, Judaism can again find those elements which are valuable in its aspirations toward progress, the great human aspirations which have been submerged in the present catastrophe.

The fate of a Judaism conscious again of its own deep solidarity and its own values, both individual and collective, while at the same time conscious of its responsibilities and its duty towards a world which must be made more human, but in which irrational imponderables and not only the logical and rational surfaces must be recognized—this Jewish fate will in the future as in the past remain united with the fate of Western culture. And it is through the comprehending of its specific immense, sorrowful burden and its constructive world responsibility that Judaism can contribute to that deepening of man's inner conscience and that development of new forces in political and social life which are the two complementary roads towards a more authentic and perhaps more lasting freedom.

CAN THE MARSHALL PLAN SAVE EUROPE?

The Economic Struggle Behind the "Two Worlds"

JOEL CARMICHAEL

PARIS

PERHAPS the most striking thing about the Marshall Plan was the spurt of galvanized enthusiasm with which it was greeted in Western Europe. British and French reactions were so precipitate that the delay and procrastination characteristic of international assemblies since the end of the war were replaced by an absolutely breakneck speed in rushing through at least the preliminary administrative steps necessary for a conference. It did not take more than a week before a standing committee was set up, largely at Bevin's insistence, for replying to and briefing the State Department, and by the end of another few weeks the sixteen countries that had responded to the hopes generated by the Marshall statement were deep in the by-play of elaborating claims and counter-claims.

The nature of the American response to this, however, makes it seem almost as though the Marshall Plan had been put forth in a fit of offhanded irresponsibility. As soon as the smoke of European eagerness had died down it was clear that the plan under discussion was no plan, but an offer of aid, and that even as an offer of aid nothing was being said about either its volume or, perhaps more important, the delay likely in providing it.

This is, to be sure, far from true with respect to the State Department: there the

enthusiasm for the project, evidently generated by political considerations, has been unrestrained. But the uncertainty of Congressional approval appears to have made the entire acceptability of the plan, not to speak of its success, dependent on a sort of publicity campaign conducted by State Department lawyers with an ax to grind. And since it was clear not only that urgency was the keynote of the entire project, but that the essence of the matter lay precisely in the political implications of any material assistance, the discussions were oppressed by a nervous futility which resulted in a majestic anti-climax this September when the report was finished and instantly rejected, in what was then its form, by Mr. Clayton and his advisers.

WHILE the awareness of the European crisis is now more intense than ever, for the crisis atmosphere itself has grown enormously since the Marshall statement, the practical possibilities once ascribed to the Marshall Plan have become dissipated in an interregnum of American dilatoriness. The United States has been caught somewhat short: in the words, much quoted, of the *Washington Post*: "We expected them to jump six inches or so. But we never thought they would jump ten feet."

This is perhaps all the more remarkable since the mere projection of a plan of any kind implies the recognition by leading American circles of the enormous gravity of the European situation. The crisis has become a commonplace for everyone; the briefest of statistical references will recall its outlines. The *London Observer* put it as concisely as possible when it pointed out (June 22, 1947) that the economic bankruptcy of Europe since the end of the war has been

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prevented exclusively by American credits amounting to 750 million pounds a year, and indicated that the significant thing about this was that only a fraction of the sum—less than 100 million pounds—was being used for economic reconstruction, the rest being applied principally to the purchase of foodstuffs.

Thus, in a situation in which everyone agrees that the crying need is for the rebuilding of the productive plant, and in which the long-range and essentially far-sighted American policy of helping Europe is creating political friction domestically, the funds squeezed out of a balky Congress that could be used for the rebuilding of capital equipment are being fruitlessly dribbled down the bottomless well of European malnutrition, thus continuing a vicious circle that can only be broken by the resumption of production on an adequate scale.

The *Observer* also gave certain figures for the actual decline in the food production of Continental Europe because of the war. The following emerges from a comparison with 1938: meat: from 11.1 million metric tons to 6.6 million; milk and dairy products: from 94 million metric tons to 64 million; sugar: from 6.6 million metric tons to 5 million; various oils: from 4 million metric tons to 2.9 million. Coal has gone down from a pre-war monthly average of 46.2 million tons to 37.5 million; and steel from 51.6 million tons annually to 28.6 million.

This catastrophic and apparently irremediable decline has inevitably implied a disproportionate dependence on the United States as the principal surplus supplier in the world. Italy, for instance, now receives 58 per cent of its total imports from the United States, as against 11 per cent before the war; Poland, 44 per cent as against 14 per cent; France, 30 per cent as against 10 per cent; Holland, 25 per cent as against 8 per cent; Belgium, 18 per cent as against 9 per cent; and Great Britain 18 per cent as against 11 per cent.

A GAINST the background of European inadequacy even the Marshall Plan,

which, as suggested above, should more appropriately be called a tentative offer of aid, or an offer of tentative aid, merely constitutes a last-ditch emergency measure. For even if it comes to a matter of supplying the sixteen countries which responded to the Bevin-Bidault appeal with four or five billion dollars a year over a period of four or five years, European economy will at most be restored to its 1938 level—which was, moreover, a very poor year.

The motivation of the Marshall Plan evidently arises out of a profound awareness of European distress, and insofar as it involves the substitution of systematic and comprehensive economic assistance for the mere piecemeal pump-priming of individual countries it must be interpreted politically as a sign of the crystallization of anti-Soviet opinion.

Yet there has been a curious lack of follow-through in the actual implementation of whatever was in the mind of the State Department when it authorized Mr. Marshall's statement; this is partly a result of the immensely turgid and indeed often incomprehensible instructions of the State Department representatives to the sixteen-power conference, and more basically, of course, a result of the haunting undependability of Congress.

THIS lack of follow-through, combined with the larger uncertainty of American political behavior on an international scale (perhaps an inherent defect of the American political system), has naturally led to a general discouragement. This has been exacerbated first by the recent revelation (in the middle of August) of the headlong acceleration of the European collapse, then by the frustration of European middle-class opinion in its euphoric expectation of being dandled safely on Uncle Sam's knee away from the clutches of the ogre in the East, and finally by the downright statement by Mr. Clayton at the conclusion of the Conference's labors that, even after all the whittlings down and skimpings which had already largely emasculated the report that was issued, there was

little likelihood that Congress would part with the necessary credits.*

The lack of any articulated and concrete offer on the part of the United States, coupled with the footling impression of nerveless impotence made by the British and French governments, has enormously increased the political tension already hanging like a pall over Western Europe. Walter Lippmann's assumption, in his last article in the magazine '47, that the Europeans are perturbed not about the United States' remaining in Europe but about its program when it does, seems to me naive: the prospect of European self-determination is so remote that no responsible capitalist group, depressed by the situation in the East and thoroughly harassed by the growth of working-class opinion at home, would dream of welcoming American intervention, with or without commitments, in any shape or form, with anything but relief.

While it may be an exaggeration to say that the whole of Western Europe, whatever its organization, is indefinitely bound to the chariot of American economic superiority, still there can be no doubt that for the period of the next few years at any rate the only thing that can dispel the fear of being ground between the Soviet power on the one hand and domestic social unrest on the other is the lavish award of American credits.

THE paradoxical thing about the diplomatic snags that have beset the formulation of some program in response to the American offer is that it is precisely the American support of some comprehensive scheme of European aid centered on Britain and France that led to an impasse—even though it was only temporary. For, from the French point of view, the catch in the Marshall Plan emerged

when it became clear that the basic premise of any such scheme of European upbuilding had to be the salvaging of German industry as the nucleus of a general reconstruction.

Now the French in this matter have an obstinacy and single-mindedness that can only seem irrelevant to outsiders. They are perfectly well aware of the present decisive inferiority of the German economy relative to both the United States and the Soviet Union, and they are also aware that it is now the opposition between these two great states that constitutes the framework for all political activity on a world scale. Nevertheless any proposal whatever to raise the level of German industry founders on French opposition.

This opposition, moreover, seems to be equally intense among all shades of opinion, although one would imagine that since the revival of German industry is generally interpreted as an anti-Soviet American maneuver—tirelessly harped on by the Communist press—this alone would be taken as an adequate guarantee of its merits by a French bourgeoisie hysterically conscious of its political impasse at home. It may be possible to get around this French obsession by some guarantee of security such as Senator Vandenberg's idea of a Franco-American alliance; but unless there is, there is only the dimmest of prospects for overcoming the strains and stresses involved in any consolidation of European economy. As it is, the general French nationalist phobia now being exploited by the Communists in France is reinforced by the position of the French steel interests, for the figure of twelve million tons of German steel annually, handed down by the British and American authorities as a revision of the Potsdam agreement, in effect prejudged the issue that is of chief concern to the French: namely the expansion of French steel by the import of German coal to France rather than the expansion of German steel by the export of French ore to Germany. Thus, while it might be possible for the French to agree to an increase in German coal production, they insist it must be used only partially for the revival of the German steel industry.

* A further revision of the report, in which the United States was to be asked for credits of nineteen billion dollars over a period of five years, on the assumption that three billion more, to be spent for capital equipment, would be available from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, was found acceptable by Mr. Clayton on September 16, and this plan has been officially presented to the United States.

IT is evident that the Marshall Plan, in whatever form it emerges from its present indeterminate and confused state, can only be effectively implemented if its basic intent is realized: this is the establishment of a schedule of economic claims and capacities within an area of agreement broad enough to allow for the formulation of a comprehensive program of production. Nothing piecemeal will do. The report that finally emerged with diffidence from the deliberations of the Paris Conference failed to persuade the State Department consultants that it was the sort of horse the present Congress was likely to bet on. It appears to have been such a disappointment to them that an idea which had received some publicity beforehand, the creation of a Western European customs union, was plumped on as a fruitful or at any rate persuasive way out of the impasse, and the two countries most eager to wag their tails at the lightest of American hints, Italy and France, began pushing the question with impressive energy, to say nothing of the smaller powers, who agreed to "study" the question.

But since one of the principal reasons for the superficial character of the Paris Conference Report was precisely the reluctance to surrender sovereignty to any central authority, even a purely supervisory one, any customs union project at present seems utopian, despite the obvious necessity of some such step to make Western Europe a viable unit. The attraction of the idea is of course immense, aside from its great appeal to the imagination of the broad masses of people. If it could ever be implemented practically it is obvious that a unified Europe would represent a potentially enormous economic power. The sixteen governments involved in the Marshall Plan discussion represent 212 million people, among the most highly trained and efficient workers in Europe and the world. Five of these governments have great colonial possessions with over 237 million inhabitants (excluding India) and have control of immense resources in raw materials. Culturally, of course, despite a long history of fratricidal bickerings, they are much closer together than any other comparable assemblage

of states. But however imperative the surrender of some portion of national sovereignty may seem to outsiders, it nevertheless seems to entail too great a subjective sacrifice; only extreme and continuing distress, aided by a peremptory stimulus from outside, will be able to impose such a solution on the dwarf-states helplessly ensnared between America and Russia.

Mr. Clayton's disappointment at the report finally handed down by the Conference was all the more striking in view of the immense zeal shown in trying to meet the American demands for a maximum of niggardliness. About ten billion dollars were struck off the final list on the basis of thinking universally admitted to be wishful and understandable only as a feat of press-agentry. The reasons given for excising these ten billion dollars—the assumption of a massive American import movement, and the assumption of a radical shift in world prices against America—are so obviously unfounded that the pathetic attempt to contrive a tasty and economical dish for Congress entails the probability that the assistance needed by Europe will be provided only to the degree of enabling it to stagger along from crisis to crisis, with the assurance of ultimate collapse. Apparently even this ruthlessly pared-down schedule of needs was considered to be inadequate, that is to say, excessive from the point of view of Congress: and if one considers that the real difficulty vis-à-vis Congress is not in persuading it merely to swallow the Marshall Plan in the first place, but to endorse the allocation of dollar credits to European countries for *purchases outside the United States*—the fact that about two-thirds of the requests are for foodstuffs immediately brings in Argentina and Canada—it must be said that at present the outlook is still gloomy.

ALTHOUGH it can hardly be doubted that something concrete will eventually be done for Western Europe, up to now the most dramatic effect of the announcement of the Marshall Plan has been in Eastern Europe. The Plan was generally taken to be not only a recognition of European economic

distress but, politically speaking, a reaction to the systematic campaign of bloc-building in the Soviet orbit, and the process of action and reaction has in fact culminated, in the absence of any clear-cut and positive Western program, in the stimulation of Soviet isolation.

The past summer has seen a great increase in the efforts made to reinforce the commercial ties between the countries in the Soviet orbit. The touring season in Eastern Europe has been in full bloom: politicians and economic advisers of all eight Soviet satellites have been whipping back and forth to each other's capitals, as well as to Moscow and the Soviet Zone of Germany, spinning a complex web of bilateral trade pacts, economic accords, quota arrangements, etc. The Russians, having seen to it that the countries within their sphere rejected the possibilities of the Marshall Plan, felt it incumbent on themselves to offer some sort of compensation, even to the extent of imposing further sacrifices on their own people, as in the waiving of Rumanian and Bulgarian reparations on behalf of all eight countries; and there are also the levies to be made on the meager stocks of the Soviet Union itself and on its own current production. All of this is to take place within the framework of economic treaties now pouring into the chancelleries of the satellite states.

It requires no great insight to see that the obvious and indeed the unconcealed aim of all this hectic activity is the creation of an immense economic bloc as self-sufficient as its resources will allow. For the first time in modern history the Balkans and the entire Danube area may be welded together in a single economic organism that may smother the ancient social and political tensions and bring the 120 million people who have come into the sphere of Moscow since the end of the war into a fruitful economic unit no longer enfeebled by the necessity of maintaining armies, customs barriers, etc. This is evidently of fateful consequence for Europe and the world.

It is true that the Russians recorded their rejection of the Marshall Plan in a highly disingenuous way—for them to come out as

the champions of small countries and of the rights of petty nationalism, after trumpeting the paramount privileges of the Big Powers at every international conference since the defeat of Germany, takes a bit of swallowing—but granted the facts of their economic situation, there was really hardly any reason to have expected them to behave otherwise.

THE sharpened political schism this implies, which is certainly unwarranted by the actual economic interests of Europe, has naturally had a direct and indeed overwhelming effect on economic reconstruction. There have been some hopeful voices talking enthusiastically about the invigorating prospects of a brisk trade between the Western European countries and the Soviet Union and/or the countries of the Eastern bloc, but these hopes seem illusory, though there is no doubt that under a different order they would be an organic necessity arising out of the actual complementary needs of both areas.

The reason for the unlikelihood of any really massive trade between Eastern Europe and the West must be sought in the economic situation of the Soviet Union itself. It is often thought that the principal reason for Russian isolationism, mistrustfulness, etc., is simply a fanatical phobia directed at the great power of the United States. There may be something in this, but what is far more important is that the organic requirements of planned economy as such constitute in fact an autarchizing factor of first-class importance leading to economic self-sufficiency.

The Soviet Union would have nothing in principle against a continuation of Lend Lease (which amounted to nine billion dollars) in one form or another: this is the significance of Molotov's agreement in principle to a European conference which would limit itself to drawing up for the United States a catalogue of credits desired by individual European countries and a corresponding schedule of priorities. But since the Marshall offer of aid for reconstruction is based on a quite different theory it is evidently impossible for the Soviet Union to agree to it without disturbing the develop-

ment of her foreign trade, based as that is on the exigencies of planned economy.

It must be remembered that the foreign trade of the Soviet Union in the last pre-war year was actually smaller than that of Switzerland, and has been declining steadily in terms of percentage of world trade. In 1913 Russian trade constituted 4.2 per cent of world trade; in 1931, 2.2 per cent; and in 1936 and 1937, it amounted to 1.3 per cent. The resumption by the Soviet Union of an extreme form of its autarchic policy, begun in force after the 1929 depression, is a reflection of the great difficulties involved at this moment in a planned economy. The control of the immense territory of the Soviet Union in the framework of a planned economy requires a maximum of stability in the data taken as the basis of planning. The throttling of her foreign trade means for the Soviet Union the reduction of all external factors of disturbance to a minimum; this is all the more welcome in view of the purely internal difficulties involved in planning. For all these reasons the autarchic tendencies of socialist planning seem unavoidable.

THE real significance of the construction of the so-called Eastern European economic and political bloc from an economic point of view is that, by imposing a dense network of economic relationships on its satellite states, the Soviet Union is able to take maximum advantage of the different national labor skills and specialties while simultaneously insulating itself against the fluctuations in the world market. As a result of the manifold forms of control exercised by the Soviet Union on its satellite states, principally of course by its combination of military power and the mass movements of the Communist parties, the Kremlin can compel the satisfaction of its own economic needs by adapting forcibly, if need be, the various national economies of its satellites to Soviet planning.

It is for these reasons that Molotov's brusque refusal to participate in the European conference now going on cannot help but have fateful consequences for interna-

tional trade. For the creation of this autarchic bloc in the East is bound to disturb the previously natural relationship of the industrial West with the agricultural East by sharply limiting the flow of industrial products eastwards and agricultural products westwards. In other words, the countries that accepted the Marshall Plan will perforce turn westwards for trading connections to a much greater degree than before.

It is true that the degree of isolation of this would-be Eastern European autarchic bloc must not be exaggerated. It represents an innovation in terms not only of immediately past history but also in terms of the actual degree of dovetailing of the economic capacities of members of the bloc. The fact is that the eight countries now commonly considered to be Soviet satellites did not have much trade with each other before the war: Czechoslovakia, the most heavily industrialized country of the "bloc," got only 14.6 per cent of its imports from the Danubian area and exported to it only 19.3 per cent of its exports. The other countries of the bloc, including Russia, had only 5.5 per cent of Czech foreign trade. Western Europe (France, Great Britain, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland) together furnished about 21.3 per cent of Czechoslovakia's imports and consumed 22.9 per cent of her exports. This situation is roughly characteristic of the whole area with the exception of Austria and Hungary: Poland, for instance, got 12 per cent of its imports from the Eastern bloc, 16.2 per cent from Germany, and 26.2 per cent from Western Europe, and exported only one-sixth of its exports to those countries, the same fraction to Germany, and much more than one-third to Western Europe.

Accordingly, it seems difficult not to see something imposed or factitious, i.e., political, in the whole arrangement. Of course there's no doubt about the potentially enormous resources of the Eastern bloc, outside the Soviet Union, or that its potential economic strength will be a tremendous asset to the foreign trade balance of the Soviet Union as a whole. Rumania, for instance, is still the largest European oil producer, with Austria next and

then Hungary; the area as a whole produces more than a third of all European food-stuffs, which will play a large role when the famine now prevailing there is overcome.

Nevertheless the Soviet Union is handicapped at the moment by the fact that it is incapable, and will remain so for several years, of supplying these countries with the consumers' goods and the technical equipment they need so desperately, or of absorbing what was approximately the 80 per cent of their products that went to Germany and Western Europe before the war. It is simply impossible for the Soviet Union to cut the commercial bonds between many of its satellites and the West: this alone effectively prevents the emergence of a homogeneous East European economic pattern. In 1946 the Russians provided only 9 per cent of Czechoslovakia's imports and took only 12 per cent of her exports. The Western European countries now discussing the Marshall Plan accounted for 42 per cent of Czech imports and 54 per cent of Czech exports; if the United States is added, the proportions are 50 per cent and 62 per cent. Finland's trade with Western Europe and the United States amounted to 70 per cent of both her imports and exports; in 1946 Great Britain was Finland's biggest customer, buying 27 per cent of her exports and sending in 21 per cent of her imports, as against a Russian share of 20 per cent of Finnish exports and 21 per cent of imports.

THESE few figures are sufficient to illustrate both the tendency toward the reorientation of European trade and the difficulties in the way of its realization. For some time to come the Soviet Union will doubtless be unable to fulfill adequately its role as the counterpart of the United States in its Eastern Marshall Plan: while its political hold on its eight satellites may remain unchallenged, it is clear, from the suppressed signs of resentment that were aroused even in these countries by the Russian-imposed veto on participation in the Marshall Plan discussions, that some compensations and freedom of action will have to be allowed them, if

only because of the devastated condition of the Soviet Union, and the general and decisive present inferiority of the bloc as a whole compared with the inexhaustible economic power of the United States.

This compensation can only take the form of a general rationalizing of the area and development of its resources. In the interim, until the region is sufficiently industrialized and provided with enough technical skill and equipment to satisfy its own needs, it will be necessary for the Kremlin, while insisting on the priority of its own economic interests, to allow the countries of Eastern and South-eastern Europe most intimately bound to European economy as a whole to retain a certain latitude in their trade connections with Western countries. Perhaps it will also prove advisable for the Soviet Union to co-ordinate these economic buffer states into its own commercial arrangements with Western countries, in order to protect itself from the uncertainties arising from the general evolution of the world market and keep them from affecting its own planning. But this priority of the trade interests of the Soviet Union implies a complete dependence on the principle of bilateralism in its trade accords with the non-Soviet world, if only because of the necessity of insuring against any of the conjunctural risks involved in trading with countries subject to the flux of the market. And, since the United States stands firmly on the principle of "free" or multi-lateral trading, a direct consequence of its overwhelmingly powerful economic position, the trade policy of the Soviet Union is inevitably diametrically opposed to the American theory and its reflection in the Marshall Plan.

This is of course an inverted way of describing the necessities which engendered the Marshall Plan, and also, in passing, the problem involved in the insatiable "dollar hunger" which has become such a common phenomenon abroad since the end of the war. It is true that the causes and symptoms of the present-day dollar shortage are essentially nothing more than a reflection of the difficulties of the immediate postwar period, and

hence may be temporary. But at the same time the exhaustion of war, coupled with the social unrest, has created conditions that make it impossible for the readjustment mechanisms of a market economy to give an adequate solution of the problem of renewed production. Accordingly, in order to save European economy from being forced to depend entirely on state controls and a stifling of private enterprise, that is to say, in order to insure a modicum of success to the conference recently in session in Geneva for the creation of a constitution for world trade—world trade, that is, based on American free-trade concepts—what is needed is American credits, not so much to counteract the shortage of dollars as to eliminate the shortage of goods underlying it.

This, to my mind, is the perspective from which to view the Marshall Plan. Europe

has been hit so hard by the war, and its industrial heart, Germany and the Ruhr Valley, so throttled by the stupid repressive policies of the occupying powers, that it has lapsed into a spiral of cumulative depression, from which it cannot recover in time—i.e., before the Soviet Union grows too strong—without substantial external aid. And without American dollars—that is, without the surplus products of American industry—no free-trade system in the immediate future would be conceivable.

It is this radical difference of structure between the Soviet area and Western society that lies at the root of the present threatened division into "two worlds," and it is this problem of social structure which must be solved if the unprecedented potentialities of modern technique are ever to be directed into a wholesome path.

A FUNERAL

ELCHANAN ZEITLIN

Sadly through the muddy snow a horse is plodding
With great tears staring in his eyes,
Pulling a black casket
His long head bent low.

A bundle of mourners like a bundle of chips
Huddles round the bier, shadowy and blind.
From far off it seems a blue forest is
Rocking slow and easy on the black wind.

Narrow and pointed, a sob, torn out of nowhere, hangs,
Sticking like a dart, in the damp-sticky body of day.
A tall Jew wipes a man's crude tear from his curly beard.
A wild-eyed Jewess plucks clumps of hair like black feathers from her head.

ELCHANAN ZEITLIN, a gifted journalist and a sensitive poet, died in December 1942, at the age of forty, in the Warsaw ghetto. "A Funeral," here translated from the Yiddish by Jacob Sloan, is taken from a collection of his poetry published in 1931.

THE WORLD OF SAUL STEINBERG

A Mirror Reflecting the Forlornness of Modern Man

HEINZ POLITZER

THE poet Heinrich Heine once called himself *un romantique défroqué*, an unfrocked romantic. What he meant to say was that, although an adept at the romantic way of life, he had yet preferred to strip off all grave solemnity and escape into the broad light of our common day. Under this confession we sense both a boyish pride over his successful emancipation and a pang of conscience over his apostasy.

The draughtsman Saul Steinberg is an unfrocked Surrealist. He went through the usual apprenticeship of the modern artist: the French Impressionists, Picasso's superb contour, Klee's solipsistic musical reverie, the extravagances of the Futurists. His figures, like those of the surrealists, inhabit a world governed by dream logic and dream perspective. His art addresses the irrational component in man, the soft spots in our emotional make-up. He is a teller of everyday fairy tales, a visionary of the chimerical, a

metropolitan *fantaisiste*. But he appeals not only to the connoisseurs and snobs but also to a wider audience. And he draws his caricatures for the *New Yorker* and other American popular magazines without the slightest feeling of compunction. The remarkable thing is that the masses seem to follow him through his tortuous reveries.

It seems almost as though people had been expecting him, as though there had been a vacancy waiting to be filled. Successes of this sort tell us even more about the public state of mind than about the achievement of the artist. They are symptoms of a prevailing moral temper, and arresting as such.

At first sight, there seems to be nothing particularly striking about these drawings, except for a craftsmanship both expert and discreet. At times they are like jigsaw puzzles that demand close study. They are tantalizing rather than amusing, and some of the most effective ones might easily be brushed aside as being merely sophisticated. Moreover, Steinberg is averse to compromise and singularly faithful to his vision. He does not curry favor with his public; rather, his attitude implies an unequivocal *je m'en fiche*—or “I don't give a damn.” There is something about him that reminds us of a mischievous child, though we have little reason to fear he will ever grow up.

The attitude of coquettish insouciance that Steinberg maintains in the face of his public makes him doubly attractive. He suggests the magic of the unattainable, the tantalizing charm of closed doors. The fact that he is an unfrocked artist—an artist turned caricaturist—adds yet another charm to his work. His art is, so to speak, the utmost concession made by a sophisticate to an unsophisticated public. After all, a highbrow cartoon is still a *cartoon*.

POET and critic, HEINZ POLITZER was born in 1910 in Vienna and emigrated thence to Palestine in 1938, where he now lives. He was co-editor with Max Brod of the first five volumes of Franz Kafka's *Collected Works*, and in 1937 he published a book of poetry, *Fenster vor dem Firmament*. He also writes verse in English, and keeps in intimate contact with “Anglo-Saxon” culture. At present he is finishing a book on the Jewish contribution to German literature. This article has been translated from the German by Francis C. Golfing. SAUL STEINBERG, whose work is the subject of the article, was born in Rumania in 1914, educated in Bucharest and Milan, and came to this country in 1942. He was recently exhibited in a showing of fourteen American artists at the Museum of Modern Art. Of the five drawings by Mr. Steinberg which follow, the first three are published by permission of Duell, Sloan and Pearce; the last two appear here for the first time.

LIKE Chaplin and Gershwin, Steinberg has been able to see artistic possibilities beneath the surface of commercialism. In a sense, all caricature operates on the borderline that divides art from mere craft. It serves the prevailing temper as a kind of safety valve. Social injustices become more easily bearable when they are exposed to ridicule. Psychological maladjustments lose much of their terror when we are shown that our next-door neighbor suffers from them no less than we. At its best, caricature releases powers that have long been repressed by social or political taboos. While the movies act as media of wish-fulfillment, caricature may be said to take the poison out of reality.

Caricaturists proceed, on the whole, naturalistically. They take a feature of the actual world and enlarge it until it takes on grotesque proportions. Thus we are confronted with separate phenomena fantastically bloated. Or caricaturists fragment reality into tiny bits, which they then put together again in an unexpected fashion, as in a kaleidoscope. Or they divest the absurdity of life of its accidental character and present it *in nuce*. But they always start from the fundamental complexity of life, and their work can be reduced to and understood in the terms of reality as we ourselves know it.

Saul Steinberg proceeds differently: he does not parody the actual world but creates a new one. His distinguishing feature, when compared with other contemporary caricaturists, is the fact that his method is neither descriptive nor distorted. Instead he creates an autonomous microcosm governed by peculiar laws and incalculable chances.

His universe is essentially a child's world. Something must have gone basically wrong in his early childhood. He knows and heartily approves of the little boy who ties his father to the floor so that he can send his toy engine running over the hapless patriarch's head. He knows and thoroughly disapproves of that fat, dogged, disheveled woman—the archetype of all aunts and governesses—who in a large number of Steinberg's drawings chases the child across the room. He is aware of the keen pleasure to be derived from driv-

ing a nail where it doesn't belong. He struggles with dogs, on an equal plane, revolver in hand; nor need he be ashamed of this advantage, since the dog is usually twice his size. The front door with its bell button and dad's brass plate is duplicated—not one foot away, but a whole world—by a bell and brass plate for the son, just as the wardrobe of the adult contains—symbolically and a whole world away—the clothes-pole of the child.

The world of the child is an honest world: two mothers exchange hypocritical greetings while at their feet their daughters growl at each other what the adults are afraid to say. But the child's world is also creative in the sense of primitive art: it draws no line between the object and its symbol. Take for instance the signpost pointing to the hospital. It is quite logical that the index finger of the hand should be bandaged. Or take the notion of passing time. Time passes quite literally—that is, the clock must consume itself. Once it is past, time no longer counts: it is dead and gone, and after three quarters of an hour only one quarter of the clock remains visible.

In terms of drawing, this child's world is clearly distinguished from the world of the adult. It possesses its peculiar dimensions. Children are not "tiny adults" but the inhabitants of a special Lilliputian cosmos. They will never be able to overcome the difference in size that divides them from their elders. Steinberg's drawings embody the primeval facts of childhood pride and childhood anxiety. Two incompatible points of view are juxtaposed in his caricatures, and the artist leaves no doubt in our minds which of the two attitudes he endorses. (Here we are reminded of certain early icons, where the worshiped figures represent a world of their own, in contradistinction to the world of the worshipers.) Quite often these two perspectives converge in one and the same drawing, thus creating effects of great comic poignancy.

THIS dimensional difference between the two universes reflects a larger problem—a problem not of art alone but of modern

society in general. Steinberg's drawings bring up the fundamental question of communication. His gloomy prognostications notwithstanding, these children *will* eventually grow up. Yet the gap that divides them from their environment is not likely to decrease: rather, it will shift from a vertical to a horizontal position. Man remains a child all his life, conserving his early pieties and, by the same token, his distance from reality and its norms.

A wall of glass separates neighbor from neighbor; they can see each other but they cannot touch, let alone comprehend, one another. Steinberg renders the isolation of modern man, his boredom, spleen, and inanity. As comedy followed tragedy on the Attic stage, so Steinberg comes after the great documents of modern isolation: Marcel Proust, James Joyce, and Franz Kafka have given birth to this ludicrous postlude. By becoming comedy it becomes palatable to the masses.

Since Steinberg is convinced of the unbridgeable gulf between human beings, he succeeds in sensing the irony inherent in all types of communal living. Take as an instance the kiss exchanged by two myopic partners, both of whom have hastily removed their glasses; or his typical "family," that aggregate of incompatible solitudes; or his recurrent crowds, whether they be composed of bearded gentlemen, or interlocking chickens. They all rush towards one another as though in fright; they press against one another as though they were suffering from cold; they cling to each other lest they be lost in the shuffle. Their favorite pastime is having their pictures taken together, though they have nothing in common but loneliness. Steinberg's world is compounded of ridiculousness and despair; it is a closed and narrow world, a world abandoned by love.

It is in this sense that Saul Steinberg, the designer of grotesques, can be called a critic. Yet in actual fact he is both more and less than a critic of social phenomena. He simply likes dogs (sometimes) and hates dictators (always), and life seems altogether hopeless to him. At times he appears as just another tormented creature, anxious to defend itself. He is neither self-conscious, nor class-con-

scious, nor art-conscious, for he lives on dreams, fears, antipathies, and, occasionally, even on sympathies. His success is striking proof that not only a small elite but also the masses have become deeply aware of man's forlornness in our technical and over-organized age.

It is not only that man has grown alien to man, but also that man's tools and implements, though originally created by him, have lost their functional meanings. Since they are no longer organically related to him, these instruments look as lonely, unattached, and gently ridiculous as man himself. Steinberg illustrates this fact by turning inanimate objects into fantastic beings that act as though they were alive. Yet they remain fundamentally rigid in their abject loneliness, a precise replica of modern man. There is nothing human in their ambience.

Steinberg's favorite targets of satire are automobiles and telephones, which in his drawings take on the look of antediluvian monstrosities and at the same time remind us of certain gratuitous Surrealist artifacts. They are both decorative and meaningless. Styles cross each other in wild miscegenation: a modern steel chair suddenly turns baroque from the seat upward, proliferating in scrolls and flourishes. These objects lead lives of complete autonomy. One picture shows a table and, placed on the richly embroidered tablecloth, a cup and plate; right by it a high-backed cushioned chair—nothing else. The effect of the décor is at once profoundly tragic and comic, simply because man—the lord of all this—is himself absent.

It is characteristic of Steinberg that nature plays practically no part in his drawings. He sees life anthropomorphically and egocentrically. Whenever he draws animals he searches their faces for features that might symbolize some human trait. When chance throws him into a new environment—witness his spell of service in the Navy—he concentrates upon typical human situations, disregarding the surrounding scenery or else treating it coldly and perfunctorily. His trees and mountains are not even travesties: they are nothing but

stage scenery, movable flats. He shows more interest in houses, since they may be treated as symbols of forlornness—especially when uninhabited. He also likes monuments, for they are ridiculous and make you shiver. Natural scenes mean nothing at all to him: they live neither of their own resources nor by virtue of the artist's eye; they are simply an accidental, interchangeable décor, a far-off prospect rounded off by some ornamental flourish.

STEINBERG brought back some reportage from his various campaigns. It bears witness to his sure and prompt technique and to his infallible feeling for comic situations. Yet it seems to lack the peculiar quality of his other work. It is as though the frequent shifts of scenery and the exotic reality of the various fronts had temporarily relieved his oppressive sense of loneliness; he grew healthier in those years, but at the same time less creative. However, there is one sketch, drawn during the Italian campaign, which deserves notice: a town and a street, even a wooded hill, a blasted bridge—three of the four genii on either side of the bridgehead are still standing, brandishing lyre, spear, and olive branch—also a pontoon and various jeeps, a gutted German tank, an airplane, and a bomb crater. All this is put down quite primitively, a kind of child's drawing gleaned from the deadly games of the adult world. Yet it conveys a sense of complete authenticity such as no documentary film could hope to deliver.

Accelerated by the war, the dissolution of our so-called reality has progressed so rapidly that certain fantastic and associational techniques that ten years ago were considered insolent hoaxes seem wholly appropriate today. Reporters who have seen the ruins of the Siegesallee in Berlin—fragments of imperial columns placed against an apocalyptic landscape—are unanimous in asserting that only a Surrealist like Dali could have rendered the scene adequately.

Our era meets the artist halfway, provided the latter is willing to incorporate it in his dream. Saul Steinberg has gone farther yet: he has popularized the dream by choosing

the cartoon as his medium. The novel means of expression he uses have in no way lessened his success. They have rather helped drive home the genuine quality of his representations. Reality has been trying for some time to catch up with the dreams of the Surrealists.

During the war years Steinberg also drew some political caricatures. He did a remarkable job, without the slightest compromise in matters of style. His Führers and Duces are monsters, and cruelly funny monsters, but they are more than mere ephemeral political grotesques. They are really blood relatives of Leviathan, of the Dragon, of the Mad Hatter. Yet they are more truly "portraits" of the actual characters involved than the montages John Heartfield used to paste together from photographs. The true complexion of these Adolfs, Benitos, and Hermanns—figures both historical and unbelievable—has been caught more accurately in Steinberg's extravagant fantasies than in any snapshot or sarcasm of the old traditional type. Perhaps it is because the very nature of these men seems to defy objective representation. When Chaplin tried in *The Great Dictator* to demonstrate the fabulous monstrosity of fascist "statesmen" by means of a pseudo-Aristophanic farce, he was frustrated by the clumsiness of the movie apparatus. Steinberg's pencil, on the other hand, knows no encumbrances. Also, he seems to have watched and interpreted his targets more closely. So he succeeded where the cameraman failed. Here, as on the Italian front, actuality seems to have met him halfway.

BUT Steinberg is at bottom neither a polemicist nor a reporter. His ultimate message, expressed in linear scrolls and sober arabesques, is always the same: man's irreducible loneliness. His caricatures thus become vehicles for an exodus from our age of "perfect" wars and imperfect peace.

But what is the goal of that exodus? The recent years—especially the last months of the war—have left mankind in a state of considerable doubt. With a mixture of fear and awe, modern man confronts this world of his

own making, which he is yet unable to control. The temptation is great to turn away both from the complex present and the shadowy future and to revisit instead the intimacy of one's individual past. We know that memory is so constituted that it will unravel the confused, simplify the complex, and separate the mixed.

The return to childhood has always been one of the major motives of art. Steinberg's valid contribution is his translation of the quest motif from the sphere of "pure" into that of "commercial" art. Moreover, he has managed that translation without abating the half adventurous, half wistful character of the *recherche du temps perdu*. His caricatures open up to the many what has hitherto been the privilege of a few lonely and eccentric artists.

What makes Steinberg so remarkable is his ability to picture the child's world in the round, as a true universe with its apparatus of pleasures and pains, of desires and suggestions. Also his ability to make his adults act on the child level—that is, by turns whimsically, dreamily, stubbornly. Witness that lady—presumably freckled and red-haired—who decorates her room by printing the contours of her hands on the wall, or twists a wire clothes hanger into fantastic shapes; or that tall invisible gentleman who, in a fit of extravagant tedium, attaches a time bomb to his ancient and ornamental grandfather's clock. Grown-up man sees himself here as the child in whose inviolate world he would take refuge. He smiles, and as he smiles, the great metamorphosis takes place. He can smile without relinquishing his adult pride, his matured features. Sometimes, it seems, you can eat your cake and have it too.

The world of Saul Steinberg can almost completely dispense with language. His successful caricatures either have no captions at all or could do without them. Though they may easily be understood outside America or England, they belong clearly in the lineage of Anglo-Saxon literature, in the tradition of nursery rhymes and *Alice in Wonderland*. This tendency of the Anglo-Saxon mind towards the literary hoax, the nonsense rhyme,

and the comic essay is the reverse face of its outward hardness, terseness, and realism. Steinberg's types rise organically from that deeper layer of the Anglo-Saxon mind. Yet since his world is primarily pictorial and metropolitan, his types transcend both language and culture in much the same way Chaplin's silent films do. I made my first acquaintance with Steinberg's characters in a small café in Jerusalem, and I imagine my reaction was from the start pretty much the same as that of the typical reader of the *New Yorker*. Childhood and loneliness are universal.

NONE of the Steinberg characters I have seen exhibits any peculiarly Jewish characteristics, let alone any hint of Jewish caricature. His style may be Jewish in the cosmopolitan sense, but it certainly shows no Jewish group bias. What distinguishes him from Marc Chagall is not only the difference in artistic intention, but also the difference between two Jewish generations. Chagall's delight in the exotic features of Jewish folklore has its root—his modern techniques notwithstanding—in certain conservative impulses. His art is essentially static and traditional. Many of his paintings represent the specifically Yiddish milieu of his childhood as something extraordinarily romantic. Steinberg's caricatures, on the other hand, are symbols and abbreviations for plain, ordinary people.

It would be difficult to infer the character of the artist from these drawings. They wear an almost stereotyped mask of brazen smugness, the mask of Sancho Panza or Good Soldier Schweik. The mask is adequate, for hardly ever does Steinberg's wit arise from individual physiognomies; it arises almost invariably from a peculiar situation. Faces and gestures may reinforce the wit of the situation, but they are never the cause of it. Whatever happens in these cartoons is in the nature of accident.

His situations are always based on the experience of distance, whether it be the distance between man and animal, man and his fellow, child and adult, or, finally, that between the individual and a destiny playing

practical jokes on its more or less innocent victim. This experience of *distance* is both characteristically Jewish and typical of the metropolitan way of life in the whole Western hemisphere. The Jewish attitude towards life has merged with that of all Western civilization. The same symbols can now be used to portray either one.

This merger already became clear in the novels of Franz Kafka, where the Jewish situation was examined in its metaphysical rather than cultural aspects. Kafka's characters are no longer individualized—least of all in Jewish terms—but usually wholly anonymous. Yet by a strange coincidence of history they represent both the Jewish destiny and the destiny of modern man at large. Kafka's hero is the modern Everyman. When Kafka was writing his books—at the time of the First World War—the conscience of humanity was passing through a severe crisis. This crisis enabled Judaism to announce its message in an ideal manner—so ideal that it could dispense with any formal declaration of its Jewish origin.

After twenty-five years and another world war, the prevailing temper of our civilization has found a perfect mirror in Saul Steinberg's self-ridicule, his wish dreams and anxieties. Like Kafka, Steinberg has no need to insist on his Jewishness as something special. He has identified himself with the temper of the age, just as the progressive elements of our age—those able to smile at their own foibles—have identified themselves with his vision.

Steinberg is a Paris product, even though he was born in Bucharest and received his architect's diploma in Milan. He is a spokesman for that high Western civilization which has now collected around the great cities of the Western hemisphere as if around focal points. Yet his Jewishness is not only an important contribution to this intensified sense of life, but also an integral part of its luster, its refinement.

And, I should add, of its perils. There is a

Steinberg cartoon of a man drawing another man and so forth *ad infinitum*. He draws a caricature caught in the act of caricaturing itself. (There are, incidentally, similar scenes in the movie *Hellzapoppin*, when the shooting of the film is made part of the film, so that the picture ridicules itself.) Here the limits of the possible are reached by tortuous ways.

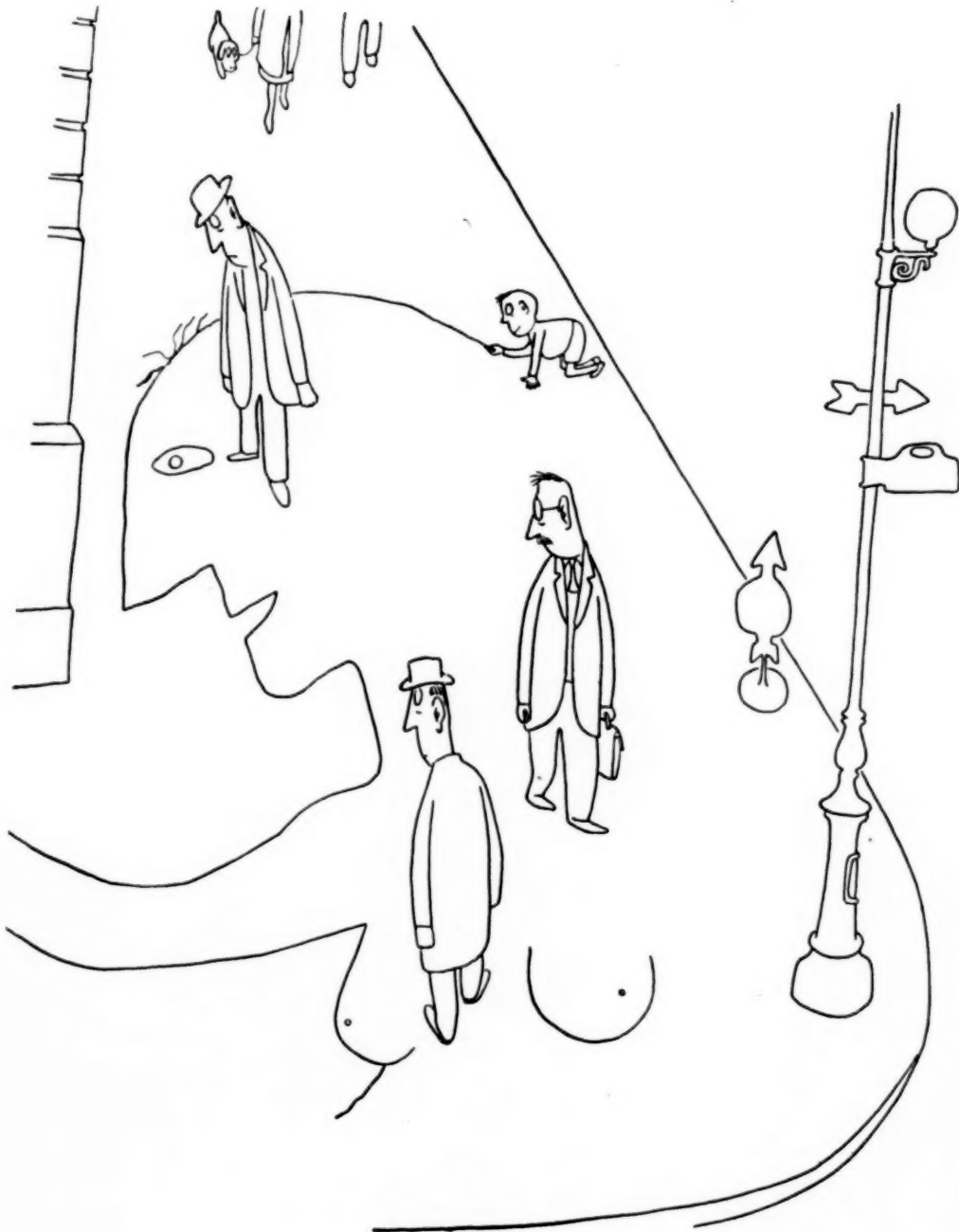
THE artist's self-projection into the world is the canonical mode of modern art. As man grows increasingly lonelier and more conscious of the limitations of all communication, the self-projection of the artist into his work tends more and more to limit the role of the objective world. The ego has moved steadily towards the footlights until it fills the whole stage, but now the hall itself is not only dark but also empty. The self-caricature of a self-caricature represents the *non plus ultra* of art. It is a jest both ludicrous and profound. At its root we find a fatal division of the creative mind. The isolated ego seems to have reached the point where it is ready to renounce all traditional standards of self-respect and moderation, and to follow the road to insanity.

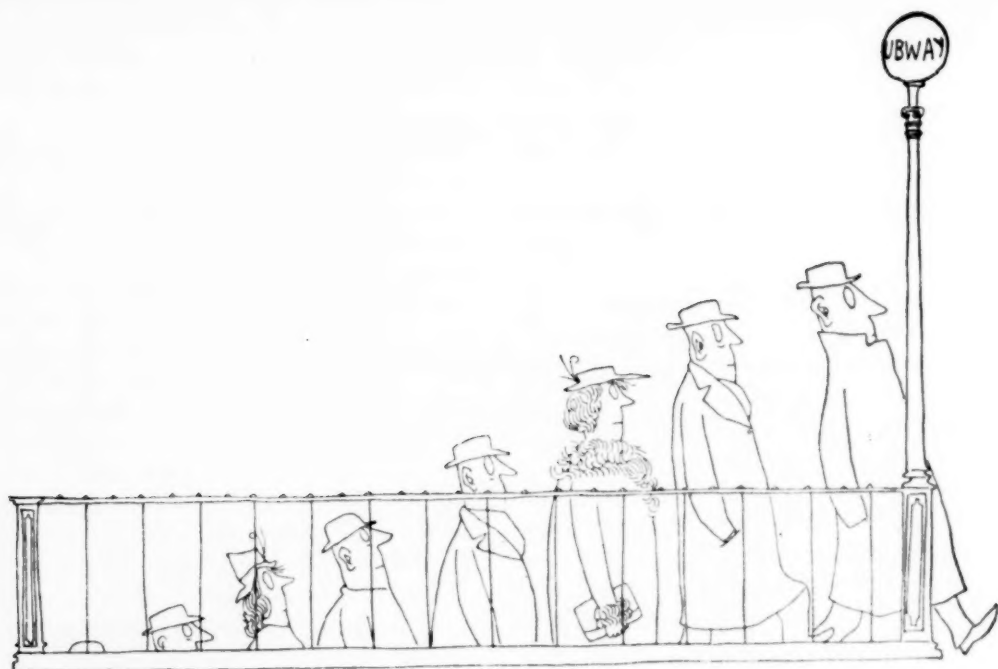
Saul Steinberg has touched that limit on several occasions and even tried, by means of charming cartoons, to make it palatable to the public. But each time he has come back to the big cities, with their melancholy and largesse, their everyday transparency, their tragi-comic and uniform destinies. He moves through these cities like a stubborn and malicious child, registering their dreams, listening to their music, and transmuting them into irony. Whatever he draws is light and airy as a dream, yet loaded with significance.

I hope he will forgive me for dwelling on his content and for having forgotten in the course of that his élan, his insidious guilelessness, and the apparently inexhaustible richness of his inventions. But all these are demonstrated by his drawings; they are delicious.

FIVE DRAWINGS

SAUL STEINBERG









JEWISH CULTURE: RENAISSANCE OR ICE AGE?

A Scholar Discusses the Creative Outlook

CECIL ROTH

AS A Cisatlantic, I obviously lack a principal qualification to discuss "Jewish Culture in America," but I am fortified by the consideration that our problems in England and yours in the United States are not really dissimilar. Indeed, the three-quarters of a million Jews in the British Empire are no negligible reinforcement to the five millions in America, even if we surrender to you our title to Canadian Jewry. Before long, when in the natural process of time the foreign-born element will have become submerged, this will be (unless indeed it is already) by far the greatest homogeneous linguistic bloc in the Jewish world, as Yiddish-speaking Jewry was for so long.

One can go further: it will be, numeri-

cally, the greatest homogeneous linguistic bloc that there has ever been in the Jewish world, even at the greatest age of Jewish cultural productivity, except this same Yiddish-speaking Jewry in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The total number of persons involved will compare favorably with the population of many smaller countries which stand in the forefront of European civilization—Holland, Norway, Denmark. Is there any reason why this group should not evolve a comparable cultural life?

IT DEPENDS, more than anything else, on the degree of interest and support that is forthcoming. After all, the Netherlander or Norwegian is in a Dutch or Norwegian environment willy-nilly, and the same was true also of the Jews of Eastern Europe a century ago. Today, on the other hand, a considerable proportion of Jews are not in a Jewish environment of any sort, and have no desire to be. Moreover, whereas the Netherlander's or Norwegian's cultural life is in most cases one and indivisible, the cultural life of even the most devoted Jew of the Western world is inevitably that of his general environment, and only a certain proportion of his cultural leisure is devoted to his Jewish interests.

Nevertheless, this often-urged explanation is hardly valid as an excuse. I gather that the maximum potential circulation of a highly successful book in the English-speaking world is well over two million. Proportionately, that would imply a reading potential of fifty thousand or more among the Jews of the English-speaking world (apart from non-Jewish readers) for a book of a similar appeal: more, indeed, since presumably we belong to a more intellectualized, and somewhat more moneyed, group. I won-

IN OUR next issue we will print the first section of a symposium on the problem of creating Jewish culture in America, taking its departure from Elliot E. Cohen's article in the May COMMENTARY. This section will include discussion by Hannah Arendt, Benjamin Ginzburg, Jacob B. Agus, Siegfried Kracauer, and Solomon Grayzel. CECIL ROTH, distinguished historian and Jewish "culture-maker" in the field of scholarship, here offers a personal essay that may be thought of as a companion piece to Meyer Levin's "The Writer and the Jewish Community" (June COMMENTARY). Together these two—dealing as they do with the realistic framework of community life which any effort to build Jewish culture must reckon with—constitute a kind of preface to the symposium. Dr. Roth was born in London in 1890. After serving in the First World War, he was graduated from Oxford in 1924. From 1936 to 1948 he was president of the Jewish Historical Society of England, and since 1939 has been reader in post-Biblical Jewish Studies at Oxford. He is the author of many notable historical works, of which the most recent is *The History of the Jews in Italy* (Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946).

der how many works of Jewish interest in the English language have commanded even one-fifth that number of Jewish readers, and especially of Jewish purchasers. (I cannot imagine that the Jewish public was responsible to any extent for the success of works such as *Jew Süß*.)

But the facts of the matter seem to be, as any English bookseller will tell you, that Jews (not the readers of COMMENTARY, but Jews *en masse*) are not interested in books—or, at least, in books of Jewish interest—whatever ideals their ancestors may have held: and unless this attitude of mind changes, there can be no solid basis for Jewish culture in the English-speaking world.

You must now forgive me for being mundane, not to say sordid. But there is no need to remind COMMENTARY readers, of all people, that even the Jewish writer must live, and that the Jewish writer is vain enough to aspire to reputation. From this point of view I certainly committed a profound error when I abandoned my original line of research and writing in general history (my first book, *The Last Florentine Republic*, received the immediate compliment of translation into Italian). My entry into the Jewish field which appealed to me so much was, from the viewpoint of security, disastrous.

Of late, another threat—perhaps more serious—has developed to the integrity of such culture as we have. Partisan labels have become of overwhelming importance, even in Jewish intellectual life, to an extent that was never true before. My advice to the young Jewish writer who wants to flourish financially is that he should become a fanatical Zionist or anti-Zionist, professional Orthodoxian or Reformer, and so on. He could then have a fair chance to be taken up (if there is a vacancy) by one group or the other, to be publicized as the genius of the generation, to find his works discussed and boosted, and to be summoned to stump the country on lucrative terms. The one thing he must refrain from doing is to preserve his integrity of mind—that would be fatal to him. It is fatal to Jewish culture that this should be so.

THAT one genus of Jewish literature prospers to some extent in the English-speaking countries is itself a bad sign rather than a good one. I refer to “defensive” or “anti-defamation” literature. While solid works of erudition or creative flights of the imagination flag, volumes that can serve a defensive purpose command disproportionately high sales. Of my own books (if I may be permitted to lapse again into autobiography), none has sold so well as my *Jewish Contribution to Civilization*, which has been through edition after edition in several languages; one enthusiast purchased a thousand copies for distribution. Under the circumstances, it may seem captious of me to say so, but I think nevertheless that this is an unhealthy symptom. It is all to the good that Jews should know about themselves; but not merely because they want to inflate themselves with vicarious pride in some Jewish achievement or “know how to answer the anti-Semites.” Had one of my purely historical works, which are presumably much the same level in quality (to my mind, as a matter of fact, far better), sold as well, it would have been a far more healthy sign.

What are the reasons for this retrograde state of affairs? One is, I think, that in English-speaking countries Jewish culture has been centered to an excessive degree in the various theological seminaries and rabbinical training colleges. This is deplorable, from the point of view not only of the public but also of the seminaries.

In the past, the strength of Judaism lay precisely in the fact that Jewish culture was the interest of every man: that each householder was a student, if not a scholar; and that the Rabbi did not belong to any priestly caste, but was simply the student *par excellence*. In Poland, to be sure, intellectual life revolved around the *yeshiva*. But there was a difference. Although the *yeshiva* trained Rabbis, it was not a rabbinical training seminary: its essential object was to train scholars, and only a minority of its alumni regarded or used their studies as a means to gain their livelihood. Hence there was in Eastern European Jewry down to our own day (and the

same applied to all the great Jewish communities of the Middle Ages) an educated laity, who participated in cultural activities, venerated scholars and scholarship, purchased books to the limit of their ability, and provided the material and moral background that made Jewish culture in those days possible—and made it great.

Today, a Jewish education above the *cheder* or Sunday school is considered the prerogative and monopoly of the professional Jew, and Jewish higher learning which has no theological or religious bent is regarded as superfluous. Under these circumstances, no great productivity can be hoped for. Norway would never have produced or maintained an Ibsen had there been no higher education in the country outside the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Oslo, or Ibsen's works would have had no patrons and readers except the village parsons. It seems to me that in America you are moving slowly (but so slowly) towards a healthier state of affairs in this respect; and perhaps you are already beginning to enjoy the benefits. I wish I could say the same of England.

ANOTHER obstacle, not quite so obvious, is the sort of cultural inferiority complex that we have nurtured all too long. We assume, I think (and you in America perhaps even more than we in England), that whatever Jewish learning or culture comes from overseas is necessarily far better than what is developed at home; that the proper language for Jewish culture is anything other than English; that the foreign savant is, by virtue of being a foreigner, of a status superior to his native-born colleague. Actually, that has not been true for years; now that the supply from abroad has dwindled, the belief is highly dangerous.

The fact is that Continental Jewish scholarship and culture were in decline, and American Jewish scholarship on the upward grade, well before 1933. There is already available in English a very important corpus of Jewish literature, mainly of American origin, which deserves far more attention and respect than it has hitherto received. English-

speaking Jewry has produced of recent years works of fiction, of poetry, of history, of apologetics, of philosophy, of theology in great number, and some of these are of considerable significance. It is however an unfortunate fact that little of this has had a sufficient circulation to justify, and still less to encourage, the publisher. If no native-born and native-trained American Jewish savants of first eminence have as yet become widely known it is, I am convinced, mainly because of lack of appreciation and encouragement. Of course, the primacy in the Jewish cultural world today is very properly and deservedly held by Palestine. The supremely important intellectual and literary output of the Yishuv is, however, dependent to a large extent on the support, both direct and indirect, of the Jews of the Diaspora, especially the Jews of America. That is as it should be. But it is on the one hand preposterous, and on the other unfair, that this should be at the expense of the intellectual and literary output of American Jewry, which remains half-starved. There are obviously sufficient resources for both. We must rid ourselves of the idea that what is produced in other languages than English is per se and necessarily of superior quality.

Of course, worse than this by far, and alas a great deal more common, is the other species of Jewish inferiority complex, that of Jews whose cultural interests seem all-embracing—except where something Jewish is concerned. We have literary epigones who delight only in literature which is strictly Gentile in authorship and subject-matter, connoisseurs who are interested in every branch of art except that which has some Jewish connection, collectors who delight in crucifixes but will not look twice at the most superb piece of 17th-century synagogal silver, antiquarians who find an overwhelming interest in everything about Wessex or Massachusetts except its former Jewish colony; to which you in America add Jewish clubs that display no Jewish periodical, and Temple sisterhoods whose ratio of Jews in their celebrity lectures is restricted to one each season.

Even where some interest in Jewish culture exists, it is often, I fear, rather patronizing: the reader preens himself on performing a rather worthy action in giving up a few evenings to a Jewish book, and wealthy patrons of culture consider that they have indulged themselves in a species of intellectual slumming if they entertain a Jewish writer or scholar. To be sure, the author can generally obtain funds for the publication of any work within reason in America—provided he abase himself sufficiently. The result of this has been that the operative factor in the publication of books of Jewish interest in the English-speaking countries has often been, not the merit of the work, but the pliability and acceptability of the writer.

Of course, no student can be blind to the importance that the patron has had in literary history in past ages. But in the great ages—first-century Rome, or 16th-century Italy, or early 18th-century England—the patron was endowed not only with money but also with taste; not only with generosity, but also with discrimination. Today, one wonders how many magnates whose names are gratefully recorded in scholarly dedications have had the assiduity to wade through the pages whose printing they have made possible. (It was, I think, her genuine cultural interest that made Mrs. Nathan Miller's encouragement of Israel Davidson's publications so memorable.) On the other hand, democratization of patronage is not necessarily a remedy. A publication society, with members paying a few dollars a year, can be made to flourish, in generous America at least (though not in niggardly England), but then primarily on a charitable appeal; in much the same way that American Jews subscribe to their synagogue funds or federation campaigns. Of course, this, too, helps: it is on such a basis in part that the Jewish Publication Society of America has been enabled to do magnificent work, and indeed to raise the status and standard of Jewish authorship, in recent years. It is, however, not in itself a sign of a flourishing cultural life, which, to reiterate, must be based not on a philanthropic approach but on intrinsic cul-

tural interest. Charity can assist culture, but is no substitute for it.

SO MUCH for the mechanism. What of the subject matter?

In the realm of fiction, there are still I think vast unexplored territories. Ever since Zangwill perfected (rather than invented) the Jewish genre novel, half a century ago, every aspirant Jewish novelist in England and America has followed in his footsteps—sometimes with considerable success. But this has always been from the point of view of the Eastern European ghetto or its more westerly offshoots. It is disappointing that (so far as I know) none of the scions of the Oriental communities has imitated this example and given us a picture of the background of a Sephardic family in the Eastern Mediterranean and its descendants settled in Manchester or New York, in accordance with the tradition weakly established in Ladino by G. B. Romano, in French by Albert Cohen, and in Hebrew by Judah Burla. This would at least have the appeal of novelty. It is now more than a century since Grace Aguilar vaguely experimented in this direction.

Possibly, indeed, one of the cultural potentialities of Jewish life in America, as of the "regathering of the exiles" in Palestine, may be the utilization of all these varied experiences and the ultimate emergence of a composite impression. But there is no sign of this as yet. What is produced in the field I have mentioned, to be sure, is not necessarily "Jewish fiction," any more than a photograph of a Rabbi is "Jewish art": it is, at its worst, simply fiction with a "Jewish" accent. Surely there is material for first-class imaginative treatment in that barely explored territory, the contemporary American, or English, Jewish scene. Not the hackneyed story of success, or of the flight from the ghetto, or of the mixed marriage, or of the anti-Semitic menace, but the varied canvas of the unsensational everyday life of Jews. All of us know, within our immediate circles, the material for more than one Jewish *For- syte Saga* or even *American Tragedy*.

On the other hand, we Jews in the Eng-

lish-speaking countries have made a serious blunder in excluding works of scholarship from the scope of "literature." The fault lies on both sides—with the scholars as well as with the public. One of the outstanding leaders of American Jewish intellectual life, whose influence in his day was unrivalled, is reported to have said of a manuscript submitted for his opinion: "If it is readable, it is not scholarly: if it is scholarly, it cannot be readable." We all secretly seem to feel the same, even if we do not express it so frankly. We assume that contributions to Jewish learning are a matter for seminaries, and that anything erudite must necessarily be dry as dust, lying on a plane entirely different from, and necessarily inferior to, the work of the writer of fiction or of the poet, to which alone the high title "literature" can be given. A tenable point of view, perhaps, for Central Europeans, but not for persons who speak and read the language of Gibbon and Motley.

The Jewish scene assuredly provides, for example, the raw material for a truly great historical literature. But, for the production of this, some degree of encouragement (not only moral) and support (not only monetary) is essential. It is idle to claim that either has hitherto been forthcoming. G. M. Trevelyan may well have fulfilled the ambition of his great kinsman, Lord Macaulay, and displaced the latest novel in the boudoir (or its modern equivalent) of the young ladies. At least one does see young ladies reading his *Social History*, or Toynbee's *Study of History*, even in public. Alas, I have never seen a young lady reading any Jewish historical work, even in private.

When I speak of Jewish history, I do not refer to a record which ended two or three centuries ago and was enacted solely in strange and remote lands. Nearer home, too, in England and America, and in our own day, events have occurred—and not in the realm of Jewish suffering only—which will one day be recognized to be of vast importance in the history of our people. Leaving England on one side, the evolution of American Jewry during the past sixty years has

been from some points of view the most important fact in Jewish history since the Middle Ages, because in it and through its instrumentality the future of Judaism has perhaps been secured. It would seem obvious that American Jewish history should have a tremendous significance in the eyes of the American Jew—not merely the romantic record of the few hundred Marrano and pseudo-Marrano settlers of the pre-Revolutionary period, but far more so that dramatic, heroic, providential tale of the establishment and development of the great Jewish community of today.

What a tale to tell! One day, it will be told as it should be. But, when the heaven-sent historian arises who can tell it, he should not be hampered for lack of resources, or deterred by the indifference of a public which persists in maintaining that if it is history it is not worth reading, and that anyway history should concern itself only with remote ages and remote lands.

THERE is of course more to culture than the written and the printed word. There is music, art, drama, ballet, and much else, which should all be taken into account. For all this, too, America has the necessary reserves, not only of money, but also (I am convinced) of talent. What it lacks is, simply, the degree of interest, among all classes, that one might reasonably anticipate—one-tenth, let us say, of the degree that is manifested in Palestine!

In the long run, then, it all comes down (like so much else) to the problem of the education of a Jewish audience. There is ample material for Jewish culture in England and America, there is no lack of workers (until they are discouraged), there is a discreet amount of selective enthusiasm. What is lacking is popular interest and popular support: and that can be forthcoming only if a Jewishly educated public emerges, both interested in the subject and willing to put itself to some inconvenience and expense to forward it. We must educate our new masters, as Disraeli said. But I suppose that I am arguing in a circle.

GOGOL'S RING

A Story

B. ALQUIT

IT WAS at the time when the Moscow subway was being built. I was then living on Tverskaya with another American, who from the first day of our acquaintance had stipulated that we should address each other as "citizen." He was to call me Citizen Zlotin and I to call him Citizen Stern.

He made a point of avoiding tourists, this Citizen Stern. He had not come to Russia to poke an inquisitive nose into the Soviet "market-wagon," in order to see what wares the proletarian revolution had to sell to a badly adjusted world. Why, then? Firmly planted in a pair of thick, warm bedroom slippers, he stood in the center of the room, stared at the smoke from his cigarette, peeled off its thin, protective paper, and with explorative seriousness scrutinized the bit of cotton in the long mouthpiece.

"Just so," he said. "To give a look at Moscow. See the Russians."

At the beginning, however, he had happened to land in one of the hotels around the Bolshoi Theatre.

"And there," he said, "wherever you turn, there stands a tourist. So I pleaded with one: 'Move on, Citizen Alexander, do not obstruct my view. I have come to see Moscow.' So he moved away, and in his place sprang up another."

B. ALQUIT is the pen-name of Eliezer Blum, a member of the editorial staff of the *Jewish Morning Journal* and the author of a weekly column in that paper. He was born in Helm, Poland, in 1896 and came to the United States in 1914. He has written voluminously for Yiddish magazines and newspapers, and is noted for his stories of American life as well as those portraying the old world of his youth. This story was translated from the Yiddish by Etta Blum, the author's wife and a well-known poet.

There was no lack of Alexanders in the neighborhood of the Bolshoi Theatre. The place teemed with foreigners—experts, pilgrims, just tourists—and, among them all, those who had not come but returned, like forgotten landlords who, before departing for the distant world, had left behind them a definite plan for a new order, a plan complete with all details. Circumstances had demanded that they should leave. But when they returned and saw how things had actually been done, they realized that strange hands, at best, are only good for brushing hot coals away.

HE WAS, this Citizen Stern, a man of about my age, but his face was a good deal younger, and his hair—almost entirely gray. An aged man in the middle of his forties. A youth with a wealth of patience. He had a taste for the antique too refined for a junk-peddler, yet insufficiently developed for a connoisseur. Although he could scarcely speak Yiddish, he was fond of Yiddish proverbs, without clearly understanding their meaning. These proverbs spoke out of him like so many *dybbukim*. They were a portion of the antiques he had inherited from the "old people" in his American family.

And his favorite *dybbuk* was: "In whichever synagogue you go, that's the *k'dushe* to intone." This was his philosophy of life. He noticed, for example, that the average Soviet citizen, often even the professional, shaved but once a week. So he immediately adapted his beard to the Soviet way of life. And he would argue with me each morning:

"It is scarcely tolerant, Citizen Zlotin. It is downright snobbery to put on your Sunday face in the midst of an ordinary Wednesday. 'In whichever synagogue you go, that's the *k'dushe* to intone.'"

ONE fine morning. The corridor squeaked with the movement of a dozen doors. Refreshed baritones responded to feminine voices. Da-da and oop-la. Says Citizen Stern:

"Surely you've heard the news?"

"What news?"

"That the new subway has pitched into an old cemetery."

And he said this as though a subway already existed in Moscow and a most peculiar accident had actually occurred. As a matter of fact, the tunnels were then still under construction, and not even for the entire length. I tried to console him:

"Such a habit have they acquired already, our world capitals, they flourish around cemeteries. In the heart of each great city you will find a cemetery. And when the necessity arises, the corpses are politely requested to bestir themselves. They are served an eviction notice. Another suitable resting-place is found for them."

"But man," he cried, "do you know who lies in that cemetery?"

"Your great-grandfather?"

Citizen Stern measured me with a face full of mockery.

"You want a compliment?"

"Out with it!"

"How much more logically could he have been *your* great-grandfather—I mean, you would wish it."

"Who is it?"

"Gogol."

"You mean—Gogol?"

"Yes, the famous Russian writer, Nikolai Gogol."

He showed me the newspaper item announcing that a group of Russian writers were to be present at the cemetery for the uncovering of Gogol's grave.

It was understood, of course, that the other corpses would not be neglected: they, too, were receiving a *due* unburial.

"And mind you," Citizen Stern added, "they have well merited the respect of the Soviet capital."

"You mean the corpses?"

"Yes, they too lived in a time of revolution. They saw the first looms, sewing machines,

and locomotives. In their time factories sprang up, tearing the craftsmen away from their domestic workshops, and there followed the first primitive outbursts of class struggle. Workers hurled stones at the machines. That was the period of the Industrial Revolution."

He took pleasure in this short historical jaunt and wished to travel further:

"Marx," he said, "Marx had just arrived in Paris, where he became acquainted with Proudhon."

"And wrote to Engels, the good-heart of the First International, that he did not trust the Russians."

"Is it not astounding?" Citizen Stern jumped up with such force that I fully expected him to tear open door and windows, awaken all Moscow, leap onto the Red Square, and shout: "Listen, people, citizens, comrades—Marx did not trust the Russians!"

But no, not he. For him, this fact was another antique, a relic deserving of close scrutiny. Let's see: When Marx said "the Russians" he meant Bakunin. They quarreled, the master-builders of the coming times. They marveled at each other and they quarreled with all the human passions of the gods. The one suspected that the other, the heavy-bodied Russian, was a Czarist spy; while the latter, in turn, admitted that had Marx not been a German and a Jew, he might well have elevated himself to a more rational system of freedom. Dynamite had not yet been discovered. But machine production had already reached its highest peak in England, and the old man undertook the writing of *Das Kapital*.

AND so, consequently, there was concern about the corpses from that period, concern that the Soviet subway should not—God forbid!—run them over. Another suitable resting-place was found for them, and at the grave of Gogol gathered the representatives of present-day Russian literature. Among them were two unknown visitors—my compatriot and I. As a matter of fact, Citizen Stern was a little late, but come he did.

For me this was a tremendous event. I could scarcely await the appointed hour. It

was the first time I had given a thought to Gogol, the man, he who had once been flesh and blood—and now I was actually to see him. Of course I was well acquainted with him, this unforgettable artist. Of all the old Russian masters, he was my favorite. But I had read almost nothing of his life, and whenever I thought or spoke of him, I thought or spoke of Gogol the rabid anti-Semite.

Had this been true of almost anyone else, I should have viewed the remains, and let it go at that. But in Gogol's case, his hatred for Jews somehow confused and shamed me. Here was a fierce sadist who could, nevertheless, write *Dead Souls*. Dostoevsky's anti-Semitism had never been a puzzle to me. To me, Dostoevsky was more brainstormer than artist, his prose full of sandy stretches leading to a dark cloister. Even in his humor—if it can be detected in his work, if passionate joy is also humor—one feels the dread of epilepsy. And as for his morality, he himself is a cloudburst over the spiritual cripples who come to kneel about the cloister. Perhaps those others are right who say that precisely because of this Dostoevsky is a greater artist than Gogol. But it seems that when Gogol arrived at such a point, he became insane and ceased writing. Perhaps that is why he was closer to me. He wrote only so long as he could laugh.

But how he laughed at the Jews! After talking about this once with a friend, I buried *Dead Souls* among the stored-away books in a dark closet, that none might see it in my home.

Only here, at his grave, did I first see him—the man.

Cautiously the grave was opened. The day was sunny but cold. With upturned collars we watched the grave-diggers and tried to read the worn-out inscriptions on the adjacent tombstones. Suddenly we all moved nearer in a circle about the open grave.

Nikolai Vassilievitch!

MY EYES were dazzled by the whiteness of Gogol's bones.

I felt as though my body were being over-

run by cold ants. My head was splitting. It was as if the skeleton possessed a hypnotic power, demanding, "Look!"

The sun flooded the grave, but it was like a cold flash from the sky. The turned-up soil of the grave breathed more warmth. The skeleton was whole, inviolate and white, as though the earth and the life within the earth, for these past ninety years, had been smoothing and polishing Gogol's bones.

No vestige of clothes, no sign of flesh. Naked. The earth, which now lay in confusion about him, had freed him from everything, cleansed him completely. Here was the skull, the ribs, and here, in the emptiness underlying the ribs, the little bones—the hands, lying one near the other.

"Nikolai Vassilievitch," someone behind me said.

I wanted to turn around, but my eyes were blinded by the golden shimmer of a ring on one of the little finger bones. I do not know how long it lasted, perhaps it was only a flicker of a moment, but I perceived the whole of sunlight in that ring, hanging so loosely on the finger bone of Gogol's hand.

And how shall I tell it? The late autumn afternoon, at that moment, had the power of an Ezekiel, who could command him to awake, who could bid him arise, that skeleton with the ring.

The grave-diggers bent over. A clinking could be heard, and I do not know how it was for the others, but for me—I swear it—that clink of bones was like a reincarnation of that distant, ancient valley. And, suitably, it spoke to me in Russian, that biblical moment. After the first glances and the first moments of silence, the spectators broke into speech. About what, do you ask? Translate it into Yiddish, into English—it amounted to the usual talk of our own literary cafés; naturally, with a Soviet coloring. But, fundamentally, the same writers' talk. Certainly they spoke about Nikolai Vassilievitch, but as though he were no longer here. But I had not ceased to see him. The sound of his bones must have heightened my imagination, for I called out, loudly, for all to hear:

"Nikolai Vassilievitch, I forgive you!"

Everyone turned to look at me. There was a sudden silence. People exchanged significant glances, seemed to inquire about me with their eyes. I was abashed but did not lose my self-possession. I felt terribly foolish but I knew that the only thing that could save me was the fool in me, if I would only let him continue talking—and he spoke:

"How clean are your bones already, Nikolai Vassilievitch. Your Taras amazed and affrighted my childhood years. I fled, together with the chickens and the goats, with the young girls and the Sabbath peace, when he and Andrey and Ostop rode past our street with spears. Those spears loomed taller than the shingled roofs. Later, you told me of Cossack hermits who lived with their rifles as with women, how they waged war constantly for freedom and for their faith, and how the father Cossack shot his own son to death, in cold blood. I thought of Abraham and of Isaac and of the command to sacrifice, and said: But Taras is a murderer. Now it is all a story of long ago. Your wars are parables of times gone by. But the unbridled Cossack strength and the great love for Mother Russia—only these are true! Arise, Nikolai Vassilievitch, see the legendary heroism of Ostop and Taras, the old partisan, and now look at the Prussians, whom you hated so. Hear them laugh—how they jeer at "Yankel" and "Mordecai"—(Yankel, General Yankel, and Mordecai writing the communiques)—how you laughed, how you mocked at them! Now they are laughing, as you laughed. Your laughter. Do you remember the guffaws? And then, how could one not laugh, watching the sheenies, how the flaps of their coats flew open, their feet up-

side down, wriggling, dancing so comically as they were thrown into the Dniester, so comically, the devil take them!"

DID I really say all that, or did I only think it?

I swear I don't know. Only this I remember well, that the people looked at me strangely. They moved away from me and came closer again. One bit his lips, pulled at his moustache. Another made a remark about the ring. It was Citizen Stern. Never before had he seen gold of such dazzling brightness—such radiance.

"Almost symbolic," said someone standing near him.

"And how clean his bones are, already," I added.

"Already?" The other did not understand. Cold north winds began to blow.

"There'll be an early winter," said one. The setting sun reddened his face.

With upturned collars we left the cemetery. Until I was outside I could hear the heavy tread of the laborers as they carried the bones of Gogol to the automobile.

Citizen Stern walked by my side in silence. He cast a look behind him. The grave's hollow was filled with earth, moundless, caved in. For ninety years this had been a hallowed place, and now—earth, earth with the emptiness of an old caved-in mouth from which all teeth had been wrenched, and it was sad, without life and without death.

"Did you see the ring?" my friend asked in a subdued voice, suppressing a shiver between his teeth, "did you see how it beamed? As in life."

"No, more brightly than in life."

PALESTINE'S MOOD AFTER UNSCOP

The Yishuv Ponders Partition

PALESTINIUS

TEL AVIV

THE news, last February, that Britain would refer the "Palestine question" to the United Nations, came against a background of increasing violence, ineffectively met, in the absence of a policy from London, by political improvisation by the Palestine Administration. In consequence, the Yishuv viewed the reference to the UN, and the subsequent discussions leading to the setting up of UNSCOP, without enthusiasm. After a decade of stiffening British resistance to Zionist aspirations, Palestine's Jews were in a mood to be deeply pessimistic about the possibilities of any political move initiated by Britain.

Nevertheless, if any of the three parties in Palestine stood to gain positive benefit from UNSCOP, it was the Jews. They alone sought an alteration of the existing state of affairs: immigration, free land purchases, and a change in government. The others, by contrast, though far from content with the present status, could only lose in any change. True, the Palestine Arabs demanded "independence," but in their hearts they knew that, because of the presence of the Jews, there was no chance that Palestine could become a purely Arab state like Egypt or Trans-Jordan. Similarly, the British, though working under extremely difficult conditions in Palestine, were after all masters of the country; any constitutional change could only derogate from, or even completely abrogate, that mastery. These differing attitudes were reflected in the welcome each accorded the UN Committee.

The Jews evidenced every eagerness to

show UNSCOP their achievements and progress. Wherever the Committee went, crowds of Jews turned out to greet them. Everyone was ready to talk—even the terrorists tried to win the Committee over to their own point of view, and to "explain" the reasons for violence and sabotage.

In sharp contrast was the decision of the Palestinian Arabs to boycott the Committee. The boycott was most thoroughly enforced. Ordinary Arabs, as well as the Arab mayors, were threatened by Arab Executive thugs with violence and extortion, and had to obey. In the end, no Palestinian Arab spoke before the Committee.

In view of the violent enforcement of the Arab boycott, the behavior of the Arab Communists was peculiar. The Communists had, in their various national colors, originally demanded the fullest investigation and discussion by the UN of the Palestine problem, chiefly, it was thought, in order to bait Britain. Yet, when the Arab boycott was decided upon, and Jamal Husseini threatened them with the "punishment due to traitors," the Arab Communists fell in line.

The British civil officials viewed this latest investigation as just another nuisance that had to be tolerated for the sake of maintaining British rule. Characteristic was the remark of a top ranking official to a leading member of the Jewish Agency early in June: "This won't be the last inquiry committee, I assure you."

Lesser ranking British officials—the majority of the British community—find their life and work here increasingly intolerable, managing the affairs of the country, as they do, from behind barbed wire. Their difficulties, and those of the British personnel of non-governmental bodies, have been exacerbated by last February's forcible evacuation of Brit-

PALESTINIUS is the pseudonym of a lawyer, political observer, and Zionist who has been active in Jewish affairs in England, and who now lives in Tel Aviv.

ish women and children from Palestine (believed in Palestine to have been an anti-Zionist propaganda measure directed to the rest of the world), and the subsequent government ban on British families living in Palestine. There is widespread discontent over the enforced and continued separation, especially since to return to England from the relative abundance of Palestine seems worse than transportation to the plantations in former days. There has been a great deal of criticism from these people of the Palestine and London governments for taxing so unduly the loyalty and good will of its servants.

Needless to say, the British officials saw in UNSCOP a new interference with the work which they thought they were doing as well as anyone could. The last preceding committee had been partly composed of American outsiders, who came to criticize without taking responsibility. This present Committee was even worse, containing a good sprinkling of "Communists," such as the Czechs and Yugoslavs, and even a colonial, viz., the Indian. "Communists" are the great bogey of British colonial policy. Any otherwise unintelligible British move in Palestine and the Near East can usually be explained by the red scare. The wartime creation of the Arab League, the support of seven shaky Arab states, the debasing appeasement of the Arabs, all these are justified as defense against Russian "advances" and Communist penetration. The British colonial official out here lives constantly alerted to the dangers of Russia and of the revolutionary left-wing parties.

Oil, of course, has of late loomed large in the considerations of British officials. Russian encroachment on oil sources in Iran and Iraq was halted for the time being by the decisive Russian political defeat over Iran in 1946. But now there is Anglo-American rivalry over the oil question. On the spot here, and in the Arab hinterland, the Anglo-United States oil rivalry is being discreetly but decisively played out. British officials resent the encroachment of United States oil interests into what they regard as British "spheres of interest."

B RITISH resentment against any hint of criticism and interference by the eleven-nation Committee was immediately made visible. Before appointing UNSCOP, the Special Session had made an appeal to all parties in Palestine to preserve peace during the investigation. Irgun had declared its readiness to call a truce, provided the government suspended all military court trials of terrorists. The government ignored this, and proceeded to try five Jews for complicity in the Acre jailbreak, sentencing three to death. The parents of the boys at once appealed to UNSCOP, appeal to any other court of justice having been ruled out by recent decree. UNSCOP considered the pleas, along with general representations regarding military courts, and expressed its opinion that the sentences should not be carried out. The Chief Secretary to the government thereupon protested to the Committee that these remarks went beyond their competence and declared that while the sentences were *sub judice* such comment was improper. However, it was asked here how the sentences could be *sub judice* when the right of appeal had recently been abolished. The government protest undoubtedly created unnecessary friction with UNSCOP which may well have had a bearing on their ultimate criticism of the British Administration in Palestine. This clash revealed the sensitiveness of the British to outside criticism over Palestine, even from a body they themselves had called into being.

The Palestine Administration opened the UNSCOP hearings by submitting documents which contained a strong attack on further Jewish development in general, and on the Jewish Agency in particular. The Jewish Agency's argument, which was led by Mr. Ben Gurion and was mainly a restatement of arguments put before the Anglo-American Committee last year, replied with charges of British maladministration and obstructionism. Dr. Weizman supported the Agency case, but raised its level by refraining from being drawn into the quarrel with the Administration. He made it clear instead that the Jews desired a partitioned

state in Palestine. The Agency had not dared to make this demand in so many words, in order not to commit itself in advance and thus court disappointment if partition should not be carried out, as had been the case after the Peel Report in 1938.

Several UNSCOP members at that time exhibited a distinct leaning towards a form of federalism. This drew from Mr. Ben Gurion a statement in something like the following words: "Federalism, as proposed in the two recent British proposals, means giving special rights to the Jews as a minority. We do not want to be a minority, and we do not want any special rights. Our aim is to be put right as a people, that is to say, to be made a nation in its own state, equal with other nations, and a member of the United Nations. Once we are a nation, we shall be prepared to consider federalizing for certain purposes with other states in the Middle East."

At the end of their sojourn in the Near East, the Committee drove up to Lebanon to hear the Arab states give evidence on behalf of the Palestine Arabs. The decision of the Arab states to be heard marked a victory for Egypt, which needed all the UN support it could get for its claim to the Sudan, and a defeat for extremist Iraq. The Yishuv welcomed the Arabs' appearance, believing that their further display of intransigence could only favor the Jews, who had shown themselves ready to compromise. Also, the journey to the Arab states set a precedent for a similar journey to DP camps in Europe, and so assured recognition of the natural link between the refugee problem and Palestine which Mr. Bevin and the Arabs had tried to deny.

WHEN UNSCOP left for Geneva to write its report, no one quite knew how the members of the Committee lined up on the vital issues of partition and federalism, and contradictory news from Geneva heightened this uncertainty. In consequence, the Yishuv showed rather little concern over UNSCOP after its departure from Palestine, especially since new internal developments

threatened to replace the political holiday enjoyed under UNSCOP auspices by another era of terrorism, and martial law.

Notwithstanding UNSCOP's intercession for the lives of the condemned terrorists, the military commander confirmed their death sentences; whereupon Irgun took the peace of the country into its own hands, and kidnapped two British sergeants in Natanya, a township between Tel Aviv and Haifa. (A previous attempt to hold two police hostages for the same purpose had been foiled by Hagana intervention.) The army, the police, and Hagana each immediately made intensive efforts to discover the two hostages. When these efforts proved ineffective, rigid martial law was proclaimed in the Natanya area, and searches made for two weeks, but they revealed no trace of the hostages. Martial law was lifted and the Yishuv relaxed a little. This interlude came to a sudden end when the three Jews were hanged for their participation in the jailbreak.

The Yishuv was outraged at these executions, just as it had been at the hanging of Gruner and three others in April. It was believed that responsibility for their execution lay in London, and not in Jerusalem. The effect on the Yishuv can best be described in the words of an American journalist who wrote at the time: "The Government here has a knack for feeding hatred." By its extreme step the government provided an opportunity for making heroes out of irresponsible and self-appointed discipline breakers, who, it had come to be generally recognized, had done much damage to the Zionist cause.

The Yishuv had scarcely had time to recover from its shock when Irgun announced that they had in turn executed the two British hostages after a "trial for spying before a court martial." This dastardly crime aroused abhorrence in the whole Yishuv, barring a certain very extreme section of terrorist supporters. The murder of the sergeants was quickly followed by a wild attack in Tel Aviv by the British soldiery, by now made hostile to the Jews thanks to a year of terrorist murders and anti-Semitic army propa-

ganda from above. In England the reprisals unleashed anti-Semitic excesses, not altogether unwelcome to many Jewish terrorist supporters and other extremists, whose view was that, since English anti-Semitism was bound to break out sooner or later, it had better break out sooner, so that English Jews would come to Palestine and assist in building this country!

Following this bloody week, immediately in the wake of UNSCOP's departure, both the government and the Jewish Agency took stock of the situation, which seemed to be slipping quite out of control. The High Commissioner advised the Agency that he had been given new powers to deal with terrorism, but that he would not use them unless fresh violence broke out. In turn, the Agency called an emergency all-Yishuv meeting to consider what steps to take against terrorism, and particularly whether there should be cooperation with the British security forces to uproot it. The British had lately been pressing the Agency for far more active support in this direction. The Hagana, though willing to curb and prevent terrorist outrages, had so far stopped short of turning informer on fellow Jews to a "White Paper Government."

At this point, the government took the initiative and arrested about forty Revisionist leaders and sympathizers, as well as three Jewish right-wing mayors, those of Tel Aviv, Natanya, and Ramat Gan. The High Commissioner claimed to be satisfied that these people were sympathizers with or supporters of terrorism. New indignation was voiced in the Yishuv over these arrests, but this time mostly from right-wing circles, whose members had been the victims.

THE arrests of the Revisionist and right-wing leaders appeared to the ordinary man here to mark a turn in the Yishuv's general attitude to terrorism and terrorists: the Hagana, the Jewish Agency, and the majority of the Yishuv, which are all left-wing, have now finally gone over from one-time "activism" against the British, and then merely verbal denunciation of "dissident"

terrorism, to active suppression of terrorist outrages. The process lasted over a year, and the change from statements of condemnation, as practised last March, to active suppression, had taken four months of maturing in the settlements, the political parties, and the ranks of Hagana. It was a democratic process peculiar to the Yishuv's system of discussion "at the common level"; and it had been prodded by periodic government pressure on the Agency, by the presence of UNSCOP, and not least by the dangers inherent in Irgun's steadily growing strength as compared with Hagana. The process is now completed. Today the Hagana and its majority supporters in the Yishuv are determined to strike at the Irgun and Stern gang by any means necessary, even if this should involve cooperation with the British authorities.

The Revisionists, on their part, are bitter over the arrests, for which they consider the Agency in some way responsible, by passive consent if not active connivance. They see in the arrests not only a move to uproot terrorist support, but also a left-wing attempt to hit at the Right, which has grown strong of late, especially through American Zionist backing. In fact, one result of the continued detention of the Jewish mayors will be to hinder them from running in the forthcoming municipal elections, notably in Tel Aviv. The Right suspects the Left of coveting the administration of Tel Aviv, now in right-wing hands.*

THE most difficult and the most important of all problems, however, still remains immigration. While UNSCOP was in Palestine, no Hagana refugee ships were known to arrive under *Aliya Bet* ("immigration no. 2"), i.e., unauthorized immigration. However, on the eve of the Committee's departure, a huge load of 4,500 refugees was intercepted in the Mediterranean on the ship "Exodus."

In the course of the frequent bursts of loud but desperate protest which the differ-

* Since this article was received, the mayors of Tel Aviv and Ramat Gan have been released.

ent acts of the "Exodus" drama aroused in the Yishuv—the ramming of the ship, its boarding against violent resistance, the return of the refugees to France, and, finally, the British decision to send them back to Germany—the last vestige of friendship for Britain disappeared in Palestine. It is Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Minister, who is regarded in Palestine as the prime mover of British opposition to Zionism and immigration. People and press here consider Mr. Bevin's stubborn intransigence to Zionism out of all proportion to the importance of this problem to Britain—or the Arabs—and completely out of line in its intensity or determination with British attitudes on other, more vital, international questions.

The British attitude on immigration, which is no less vital to the Yishuv than to the Jewish DP's, is the major obstacle to combating terrorism. As each new incident reveals on both sides the determination to fight this issue with more and more forcible means, and as popular feeling is whipped up and outraged, it becomes more difficult for anti-terrorist forces to keep tempers moderate. Last year the government could well have saved the situation by a symbolic concession of an additional 500 or 1,000 immigration certificates per month. The British Government, it is believed in the Yishuv, could have taken such a step without any great risk of further antagonizing the Arab leaders, who in any case profess hostility to the present quota of 1,500 a month, or indeed to the admission of a single Jew. By now, however, a far greater concession would be needed in order to break the deadlock and bring feelings back to anything approaching normal.

A few unimpassioned observers realize that the tribulations of the "Exodus" refugees, and of the 20,000 refugees now in detention camps in Cyprus, are the natural result of Hagana's forceful unauthorized immigration policy. Hagana must have been well aware of the hardships refugees were bound to undergo in running the naval blockade of Palestine. The question is whether the refugees themselves were al-

ways made aware of these hazards. However, their determined and courageous stand on arrival suggests that they are at least willing to face the hazards, whether or not they actually envisaged them before their departure from Europe.

Nevertheless, after all that has happened this summer, it is now being asked whether such immigration is worth the sacrifices. The majority of the Yishuv would probably even now unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative. However, the Hagana seems to have called a halt, perhaps only pending developments in the UN.

UNSCOP's recommendations were received in Palestine without any particular enthusiasm or excitement. The Yishuv heard with considerable satisfaction that yet another independent body had so favorably judged the Jewish case for Palestine, be it partition or federalism. It has become quite a tradition for inquiry committees to make recommendations willy-nilly in favor of the Jewish claim, and the Yishuv is getting accustomed to these compliments. Indeed, the bitter experience of delays and broken pledges inclines the Jews of Palestine to appraise the practical outcome of such recommendations as being in inverse ratio to the praise given to Jewish achievement. People believe that so long as recommendations are pro-Jewish they have little chance of being adopted by Britain. The majority report of UNSCOP is thus regarded here as too good to be useful, just because it holds out what the Jews have dared to dream of, and a little more.

This unhopeful Jewish opinion is strengthened by reports that the United States State Department does not favor an early British withdrawal from Palestine, since that would seriously expose the United States base in Greece, Egypt having already been practically vacated. As a result, some observers in Palestine do not expect Britain to accept the UNSCOP report, or the UN either, for that matter, if Britain can prevent it.

As against the generally pessimistic attitude toward the majority plan, the unani-

mous recommendations have had a peculiar reception. Although Britain's prestige is now very low in the Yishuv, as well as among the Arabs, quite a number of Jews would at heart be sorry to see Britain leave Palestine, regarding her as still the best possible colonial power, thinking realistically. (It is significant that there has been practically no comment on the resolution recommending British withdrawal.) But most Jews have had enough of British administration in its present form, and look forward to Jewish self-government.

In view of these various cross-currents of attitude and mood, the reserved Yishuv reaction to the report is understandable.

The terrorists, in true Revisionist tradition, maintain their opposition to partition and continue to demand a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan. However, it is generally felt that this old slogan is being retained merely as a face-saver in case partition falls through. In reality, Irgun is now as much in favor of a Jewish state in a partitioned country as everyone else.

The insignificant but noisy Jewish Communists have not been heard from on the report. It would seem they are waiting for indications of the Russian attitude in the forthcoming session. Left-wing Hashomer Hatzair, for different reasons than the Revisionists, has joined in opposition to the partition recommendation. But the vast majority here is for partition, and scarcely anyone mentions the minority report.

To the British Colonial officials, the report seems to be just another nuisance to be disposed of. This self-assured view, however, has been shaken by the British economic crisis with its growing demands for conservation of manpower and reduction of expenditures overseas.

THE Palestine Arabs are again sulking, completely bewildered by both reports.

Their leaders, intoxicated by their own propaganda, had hoped for a pro-Arab report, probably on the strength of anticipated British approval of such a document. Arab disappointment has now raised the question whether they were right in boycotting UNSCOP, or whether wiser counsel might not have produced a better report, at least from the Moslem minority group in the committee. Palestine Arab bewilderment is all the greater because the majority report recommends carving up and separating the Arab parts of Palestine in such a way as to increase the likelihood that these areas will eventually be incorporated into the surrounding Arab states—Syria, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, and Egypt. It is now felt that the unexpected prospect of additions to these states may soften their opposition to the majority report, even if it also means creating a Jewish state.

Jamal Husseini, head of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, therefore now goes to the General Assembly with Iraq his sole remaining real supporter. He will seek to enlist pro-Arab support by a good deal of saber-rattling and open threats at revolt. These threats need not be taken too seriously, as recent provocation on the Jaffa-Tel Aviv border has shown that the Arabs are not yet ready to rebel, that they require the support of the Arab states, which is in great doubt, and that they will have to be very desperate before they decide to engage the combined power of Hagana strength and Irgun ruthlessness.

At the present moment the mood of the people of Palestine is one of resting from the year of rebellion and repression which followed the Anglo-American Report. Anxiously they await the judgment of the UN, asking themselves whether it will be able to bring the just and practical settlement so urgently required to terminate the wasteful and exhausting friction in this peace-thirsty country.

LETTER FROM A MOVIE-MAKER

"Crossfire" as a Weapon Against Anti-Semitism

DORE SCHARY

SIR:
To begin with, and not as apology but because the credit must go where credit is due, let me say *Crossfire* was produced by Adrian Scott, directed by Edward Dmytryk, and written by John Paxton.

As Executive in Charge of Production at RKO Studios, I made contributions to it, stimulated its production, and presented it with pride as a contribution from our studio and the industry to a better world that, one day, we all hope, will be free of blind hatred, intolerance, and ignorance.

Crossfire is doing remarkably good business to very appreciative audiences all through America. It has been received with glowing and exciting notices by all but a very few critics. The mail we've received, and the preview cards totalling some 2200 individual opinions, are about 93 per cent enthusiastic and approving. Of the remain-

ing 7 per cent, some 5 per cent are cautious and apprehensive, and the last 2 per cent are anti-Semitic in character, varying from casual social anti-Semitism to the violent species. *Crossfire* was never intended to convert the violent anti-Semite. It was intended to insulate people against violent and virulent anti-Semitism.

From general audience reaction and comment we believe it will do the job of insulation very effectively.

This is the background.

Now to a step by step answer to your letter.

You begin by reciting quite accurately the plot of *Crossfire*.

You then say that most of the professors, psychiatrists, and psychologists who have seen *Crossfire* agree that it might do good—that it might reaffirm the opinions of the liberal—that it might move slightly anti-Semitic people into the liberal camp.

This is what we aimed at. It is not a definitive picture aimed at readjusting the *real* anti-Semite. No one picture, nor one book, nor one group of professionals, has succeeded or can succeed in achieving that Nirvana. The job is tied up to the great and intricate problem of the new world of peace and understanding.

Anti-Semitism is, as you say, a complex problem and our film was calculated to attack one part of the problem only: to insulate against hate while other factors were brought to bear against other lines in the complex pattern.

You then propound what is your basic fear—that the picture will promote anti-Semitism. You propound this fear by reciting how it might be interpreted or enjoyed by an anti-Semite. A violent, unreasoning anti-Semite

AMID the chorus of comment, mostly favorable, that greeted the movie *Crossfire*, Hollywood's first serious attempt to deal with the problem of anti-Semitism, Elliot E. Cohen, in his article "Letter to the Movie-Makers" in the August COMMENTARY, recorded the misgivings of himself and others about the film and Hollywood's crusade against race-hatred. DORE SCHARY, who here replies to Mr. Cohen, is Executive Vice-President in Charge of Production at the RKO Radio Studios in Hollywood, which made *Crossfire*; at 42, he is one of the youngest top executives in the movie industry. Mr. Schary was born in Newark, New Jersey, and was an actor and director in the legitimate theater before going to Hollywood, where his talent for scenario writing brought him an Academy Award (for *Boys Town*, 1938) and eventually led to his becoming a producer. It is part of Mr. Schary's creed as a movie-maker that the movies can be one of the greatest instruments for bettering the world—without forsaking their function as entertainment.

needs no *Crossfire* to set into motion his hate and prejudice and misconceptions. He has been fed by direct anti-Semitic pamphlets, programs and pogroms. The point you overlook is that *Crossfire* has not been made by Gerald L. K. Smith to titillate his lunatic fringe audiences. The Jew haters have ample material of lies and hate to feed their audience to a point of regurgitation. I don't think this film would be popular at certain rallies, and I doubt if it will be sponsored by certain groups.

Now we come to your fears about the "Judas theme." This question was specially asked at previews held in three cities, and almost 92 per cent approved completely the ending, the trap, and understood the motive of LeRoy. The remaining 8 per cent fell into two groups which argued about whether Montgomery (the killer) should have wound up in jail or whether he should have reformed. Nowhere in any of the answers was there an expression of your "Judas" fear. They all hated Montgomery and enjoyed his getting two bullets in his hide. And adolescents particularly, accustomed to Western gunplay, understood and enjoyed the villain getting knocked off by expert gunplay executed by a right guy wearing the equivalent of a Sheriff's badge.

Now to the characterization of Montgomery.

Again you make the error of seeing this only through the eyes of the anti-Semite. To the American audiences polled, he is cowardly (he runs), a double-crosser (he kills his best friend), he hates "civilian" soldiers (who comprised perhaps 95 per cent of our armed forces), and he is sweaty and sloppy (no bobby-soxer virtue for heroes).

Now to the Jew and his characterization. In my years of study and practical experience in the field of anti-Semitism, there is no characterization that overcomes the fear you express, because the Jew is labeled as something reprehensible by the anti-Semite, no matter what he happens to be.

If the Jew fights (Barney Ross, Benny Leonard, and a host of others have fought well and expertly), he is a dirty fighter, yel-

low in the clinch, and very tricky in an Oriental way.

If the Jew is poor, they all are Communists. If the Jew is rich, they all are dirty bankers. If the Jew is happily married, they're clannish, selfish, and, anyway, they have Gentile mistresses. If the Jew is single or divorced, they all are libertines or homosexuals. If the Jew was in the Army, he was goldbricking—if he wasn't, he's a slacker. If he was an officer, he bought his commission—if a private, he avoided doing his job. If the Jew is communicative, he's a buttinsky. If he's uncommunicative, he's stuck up and thinks he's smarter than anybody else. If he works for a boss, he's a cheat and plotting to take away the business. If he is a boss, he's a miser and a crook.

These opinions are like everything else about anti-Semitism: absurd. It is equally absurd and surprising that you give them credence in your open letter. No matter what the Jew had been in *Crossfire*, the anti-Semite would have read something evil into his character.

Now you say that *Crossfire* is liable to stimulate actual open and violent anti-Semitism. In setting this up, you are guilty of your first inaccuracy. Our soldiers do not "unite in an out-of-hand execution of one of their number." They protect Mitch, one of their buddies, and one of them helps lay a trap for a man, Montgomery, who he realizes is a murderer of two men. Would that all American citizens were willing to cooperate as courageously in the apprehension of all criminals. The laissez-faire attitude of the American citizen toward the laws of his country is an attitude that has always disturbed officers of law enforcement.

Your next point, expressed by some in the American Jewish Committee, claims that there is no record of a Jew killed because he is a Jew. How do you know?

As a boy, I lived in what was practically a ghetto section of Newark, New Jersey. I was punched and beaten many times because I was a Jew. Boys were killed in gang fights—the record says because of gang violence—

the underlying motive was anti-Semitism, or anti-Catholicism, or anti-something.

Only recently the Associated Press carried a story that a Jewish storekeeper was killed by two hoodlums. No robbery took place. No motive was established.

I once saw a waiter killed by a man. As the man hit him, he called him "a lousy Jew." The fact that the waiter wasn't Jewish didn't change the hate behind the man who threw the punch; also, it didn't make the waiter less dead. The man who punched was booked on a murder charge—no motive was necessary—the waiter was so very dead, and people had seen the violence.

So again—how do you know?

Of course, you don't yell fire in a crowded movie house, but if there is a fire, you do something about it before somebody gets burned. And you certainly don't yell "candy and popcorn." The point is, people *have* been burned in theaters. Marking "Exits," having fire hoses, and asking people to walk rather than run in case of fire, do not seem to have given fire prevention authorities fears about inducing fire hysteria.

Further, in relation to your remarks about lynchings—if you will check the graphs and records of lynchings, you will learn that they have always decreased as people have protested vehemently against them.

Now as to your "West Coast psychologist": he forgets that in the years since 1931 some six million people have been killed because they were Jews. A world horrified by the slaughter fought against Nazism. They didn't side with Hitler. If your thesis about *Crossfire* stimulating violence was true, the spectacle of all those sad, dead six million would have raised enough violence to have had us all butchered.

The only confusion about, *Crossfire*, I must say, seems to be articulated by you, not by the audiences who have seen it and who have expressed themselves with complete clarity on the subject; they like the picture and understand it.

Yes, Mr. Cohen, I know that anti-Semitism is a serious problem, and we have approached it with knowledge and experience

as workers in the field and as picture-makers. We do not sail uncharted seas. We have said these things on platforms, in army camps, in schools and in debate.

YOUR next point we have already discussed. *Crossfire* was not made to cure anti-Semitism. It was made to insulate against anti-Semitism. (Incidentally, it was not made to advertise Lucky Strike cigarettes, a subject with which you seem abnormally preoccupied.)

You then discuss the function of the cinema. You speculate—we do not. *Crossfire* is doing big business, and people are going to see it, knowing what it is about. If the cinema reverts to only the sedative function you wish it to perform, it will stagnate. Good art is stimulated by provocative ideas and by a challenge, and audiences are demanding this kind of motion picture.

We now approach the part of your letter which is insulting and smug, because you say that "motion pictures have never accepted any responsibility to anything except the box office." I name *Best Years Of Our Lives*, *Mr. Smith Goes To Washington*, *Confessions Of A Nazi Spy*, *Fury*, *Grapes Of Wrath*, *I Am A Fugitive From A Chain Gang*, *Hallelujah*, *The Crowd*, and *Joe Smith, American* as samples of motion pictures made with something of a social responsibility on the minds of the people who made them.

Hollywood is no longer in the nickelodeon stage—only some of its critics.

You sum up your indictment of Hollywood progress by insulting terms such as "half-baked," "pious," and "catchpenny."

We've been called a great variety of bad names, and go about our business of trying to make better pictures hoping that in time our harsh critics will stop writing open letters that often are ill-considered and injudicious.

The term "morons" you used—we never use it. Probably we give our audiences a greater vote of confidence than you do with some of your fears and irresolutions.

We did not polish *Crossfire* off in a couple

of story conferences as you charge. I have been wrapped up in this problem since I've been Jewish, 42 years last August 31. We consulted more than one expert in the making of *Crossfire*. We talked to many. We do not operate in an intellectual vacuum; on the other hand, we don't favor intellectual anarchy. If we had accepted all the reservations of the experts, we would have compromised and inhibited and vitiated a picture that right now seems to be doing the job it was aimed at doing.

In Reply

THE point at issue is not whether Mr. Schary is proud of *Crossfire*, or whether *Crossfire* is big at the box-office. Both facts are quite irrelevant. The point at issue is whether *Crossfire* is effective in fighting anti-Semitism.

The purpose of my "Letter to the Movie-Makers" was to report that—alongside of much enthusiasm or acceptance of the film by film critics, professional propagandists and social scientists (which I also reported)—there was serious concern on the part of other qualified and expert people as to the effect of *Crossfire*, and at the possibility that it might set off a whole cycle modelled on it. In view of this division of opinion, I pleaded for three things: (1) study by the movie-makers of available knowledge on the causes and mechanisms of anti-Semitism; (2) scientific testing of the effect of film dramas on the social attitudes of audiences; and (3) the development of a more sensitive, mature film art to deal more adequately with such complex human issues as race hatred.

For the record, most of the sceptics, including myself, do not condemn *Crossfire* out of hand, and most of them (still including myself) are not prepared to state with certainty whether it will prove helpful or harmful.

Mr. Schary, however, has certainty. Unhappily, neither his evidence nor his arguments offer much to justify it.

THE theoretical assumptions behind *Crossfire*, the Executive Vice-President in Charge of Production states as follows: It is not concerned with doing anything with the *real* anti-Semite;

The motion picture art contains many people of wide and varied experience and education.

We have the things you imply we lack—knowledge, imagination, and art.

However, sometimes, we lack the gall of some of our critics.

We are working at our job. To us, and to audiences, *Crossfire* was part of our job. I am very proud we made it.

Sincerely yours,

DORE SCHARY

it aims (while reaffirming the already liberal in his opinions) to "insulate people" (defined later as "mildly anti-Semitic people") against violent anti-Semitism.

In the subway station at my corner is one of Mr. Schary's posters, with the bold headline: "As Effective as a Series of Kicks in the Solar-plexus—*Time*." This admirably reflects the school of propaganda and art represented by *Crossfire*. It is the "blood-and-guts" school. Its language is violence and its method of persuasion is to translate literally the old primitive slogans, "treat 'em rough" and "education at the end of a night stick."

I confess to being a little disquieted at this dealing with the American public by "a series of kicks in the solar-plexus." But, more relevant to the practical point at issue, one suspects that it is precisely the wrong method to influence just that one group which Mr. Schary hopes to "insulate."

If Mr. Schary is concerned with the liberal and the mildly anti-Semitic, why use a fable which neither bears on their own personal problem with anti-Semitism nor presents it in terms of issues, atmosphere, or motivations that play any important part in their world? To a number of Gentiles (most of them in this mildly anti-Semitic class) in the small resort community in which I spent the summer, and whose reactions I heard reported, Montgomery was "out of his head" or "crazy." That the picture had anything to do with *them*, never occurred to them. It didn't touch them. They were quite smug about it.

Why should Mr. Schary's melodrama get under their skin? Their problem as anti-Semites

is not killing Jews; they have worries, but policemen's bullets are not one of them. For them the film can hardly be insight-giving; it presents anti-Semitism as an irrational trait of an irrational man—the product of a mysterious virus that breeds hate indiscriminately against Catholics, Jews, Tennesseans, men with striped ties—a pasted-in, slick formula, transparently false. There is no effort to illuminate the psychological, economic, or political factors that make anti-Semites. (And what, too, of the troubling possibility that for "right-minded" people pictures like *Crossfire* serve as a substitute emotional gratification rather than a spur to action? Are we not given the illusion of struggle and even of victory when the battle has not even begun? Don't we risk self-righteousness rather than self-examination and corrective action? One suspects that this was the sole political effect of the anti-fascist social drama of pre-Hitler days to which *Crossfire* bears some resemblance.)

There is a good chance that, instead of achieving Mr. Schary's aim of insulating the mildly anti-Semitic against anti-Semitism, *Crossfire* might insulate them against personally facing the problem of anti-Semitism.

AND how about the more strongly anti-Semitic? Mr. Schary brushes off this problem. He is not concerned with real anti-Semites anyway, he says; they are hopelessly unreachable. Hence it really doesn't matter how you portray the Jew or what kind of story you tell.

Odd, that Mr. Schary should run away just where you might expect him to claim the strong-arm method might work, i.e., with those less accessible to argument. Is he quick to concede so much territory as beyond his reach because he doesn't want to face the possibility—suggested by a number of social scientists—that the result here might be definitely harmful?

In any case, we can't dismiss the problem. A large section of the movie audience, if not violently, is more than mildly anti-Semitic. (The latest *Fortune* Roper Poll reveals that 36 per cent of their national cross-section believe that Jews in America have too much economic power; 21 per cent that they are getting too much control over government.)

What, then, is the effect of the *Crossfire* approach upon the emotional anti-Semite? Here very reputable social psychologists sound warnings well worth pondering. The exhibition of sadism and slaughter does not automatically cause revulsion and rejection. On the contrary,

it may make the forbidden and horrible familiar and customary, and link up hidden emotions with open action. Mr. Schary misquotes me. I nowhere said that no Jew has been killed in America because he was a Jew. But I do say that the problem of anti-Semitism in America is today not a problem of killing Jews, and that it may be dangerous to present it as such.

It was not horror over six million murdered Jews that brought the world to fight Nazism, as Mr. Schary suggests. That horror did not even abate anti-Semitism. All through the Nazi period and after, anti-Semitism increased—despite the Nazis' horrible example; perhaps—as many authorities think—because of it. More than one careful observer believes that the ghastly pitiful newsreel pictures of Buchenwald stirred very ambiguous emotions; the sight of Jewish corpses stacked like butcher's meat made Jewish life cheap, made all human life cheap. For similar reasons, many would have been happier if the producers of *Crossfire* could have found some more normal, more vigorously human character for its Jew than the stereotype of the eternal helpless victim of brute force—the predestined he-who-get-skilled scapegoat, the chosen sacrifice to man's irrationality.

Many of us would like to see the day when art presents Jews in America not as A Problem, but as people.

UNHAPPILY, Mr. Schary's use of figures exhibits a complete disregard of the criteria of scientific testing. Even when he cites his figures correctly—and sometimes he does not—they don't (indeed, can't possibly) prove what he thinks they do. The 2200 votes represent a very small sampling, especially as there is reason to believe that the sampling was not done on a representative basis. Further, no testing expert takes fan mail or preview cards seriously. For one thing, both are heavily weighted on the extremely favorable side. And certainly one should not lump them together. Incidentally, five per cent "cautious and apprehensive" could be a very high percentage, considering the circumstances. And what does it tell you about the moral effect of *Crossfire* to know that some people liked the picture? Maybe they liked it as entertainment; maybe they even enjoyed the excitement of seeing a Jew killed and his killer killed. In any case, this type of questioning applied to such a complex subject as attitudes on anti-Semitism, not to speak of changes of attitude, is obviously too primitive to be useful.

The case is no better if we examine the opinion polls Mr. Schary cites. Here too the method is superficial, low-standard, and unreliable, and, even at that, the results cited do not bear out his contention that "they like the picture, understand it." In Boston and Denver, out of 1,200 people asked about the character of the murderer, between 20 and 36 per cent "like him" or say "he is all right"! Asked "Should Montgomery have a better reason for killing Samuels?" those answering (consisting of almost 1,000 people) split approximately 50-50, yes and no! These answers may prove something, but they certainly don't indicate that "they fully understand the picture." As to the figures about the Judas theme, the 92 per cent cited has no relevance to this problem; the questions asked bore on quite other matters. And so on.

I certainly do not wish to question the sincerity of Mr. Schary's concern with the problem of race-hatred. But, if he really wants to know whether he is on the right track or not, he should make further—and better—testing studies of *Crossfire*, the kind of testing in depth, developed in recent years, which alone can probe hidden attitudes. The questions raised in my letter, and his, are still open questions. We desperately need genuine light.

It is loyal and touching of Mr. Schary to defend the art of the Hollywood film. For the sake of the argument, I'll take his list. The fact that these once-in-a-blue-moon prestige pictures are hailed as great works of art and of social significance is even more pungent comment on Hollywood than the redolent quality of its standard product. In what other art, and where else in the world, could a Cinderella-the-Giant-Killer story like *The Farmer's Daughter*, which

Mr. Schary is too modest to mention, be acclaimed as an artistic contribution to the political illumination of the nation? But none of this is news. Hollywood's slip has been showing for, lo, these many years.

On the question of art, I think I would like to quote a letter about *Crossfire* from Mr. Albert L. Furth:

"I think you are squarely on the bull's-eye with your argument that effective handling of the question of anti-Semitism in films (as, indeed, in all literature) calls for consummate artistry. To me, the basic flaw in *Crossfire* is an artistic flaw; as a work of art, the picture's birth papers are not in perfect order. Consider its origin—a novel (*The Brick Foxhole*) about the demoralization of kept-at-home soldiers, culminating in the murder (mainly from boredom, as I recall) of an unoffending homosexual. So they gave it the old switcheroo and got—a film about demoralized soldiers and the murder of a heterosexual, a Jew. To be sure, some remarks about race hatred were worked into the film; but *fundamentally* it has not much more to do with anti-Semitism than the book had. When the truly effective film on anti-Semitism is made, I believe, it will be built from the ground up, with the utilization of all the resources you indicate. The old switcheroo isn't good enough."

I am troubled most by Hollywood's certainty, a kind of conviction of infallibility that is reflected even in Mr. Schary's letter (for example, in his stunned incredulity at serious criticism of the films: "gall" he calls it)—and he is, by common consent, Hollywood at its best.

In any case, it is good to know that he is not discouraged, and is sticking to his job.

But Mr. Schary, please: (1) more knowledge; (2) more scientific testing; (3) art.

ELLIOT E. COHEN

BERLIN DAYS

Improvisations on Themes from My Life

ARTUR SCHNABEL

ONE day in spring—I think it was May—I took a train for Berlin. I may have traveled for sixteen hours; I don't remember how long it took then to get from Vienna to Berlin. When I arrived, there was no one at the station to meet me. I took an open horse-drawn cab and told the driver to take me to the address I had been given. The streets in Berlin were very pretty at that time of the year; the chestnut trees were in bloom along the Canal; I was strongly impressed. After Vienna, the distances seemed immense. (The horse did not move very fast, either.)

Two things struck me before I had spoken to any German except the porter and the cab driver. First, I saw signs on all houses: *Aufgang nur für Herrschaften*. This is almost untranslatable; the closest would be: "Entrance for Masters Only." Everything seemed very different from easy-going, leisurely, aristocratic-democratic Vienna—there is such a thing as a democracy of aristocracy, and in Vienna, if a man did not talk too much about his rights, he had quite a good life. The second sign, which I saw in restaurants, said *Weinzwang*—"Wine Compulsory." These were two ineradicable impressions.

THIS is the second of three chapters of informal memoirs by the distinguished pianist and composer ARTUR SCHNABEL. In the first selection, published in the September COMMENTARY, Mr. Schnabel described his early days in Vienna and his introduction to the musical world. These memoirs have been selected and edited by his niece, HERTHA PAULI, from the stenographic notes taken at a series of the pianist's improvised lectures delivered at the University of Chicago in 1945. Mr. Schnabel, who now lives in this country, was born in Lipnik, Austria, in 1882.

I approached my address, but the street in which the house was located was under repair and closed to all vehicles. I did not know what to do. I had several bags. I thought, "This is horrible. They should have done something about it." Just then I saw a very nicely dressed chambermaid approaching me to ask whether I was Mr. Schnabel. She had been sent to the corner where they thought I would stop; she helped me with my bags and led me to the house.

IN THIS case, while it may or may not mean anything to you, I shall tell you the name of my hosts. Their name was Cassirer and they were very prosperous—in the lumber business, I think, though they never mentioned that. All their children and grandchildren later played large parts in German intellectual life. One son, Ernst, became a highly reputed philosopher. He died in New York not long ago, after teaching at Yale and at Oxford before that. A cousin of his was an internationally known art dealer and one of the first and most efficient promoters of the French Impressionists—the man who helped launch Van Gogh, Cézanne, Monet, Picasso, etc.

It was very good for me to come into such a family. There were five brothers with many children, and I had a wonderful time. They rarely asked me to play for them; I had no work to do at all, but apparently my host, Mr. Eduard Cassirer (he had a white beard, too; only the younger generation no longer wore beards), did not quite approve of my conduct. I was sixteen then—grown up. I stayed up late and slept until noon. Perhaps I even started to flirt with his daughter.

Anyway, one day I received a note saying that my room was needed for a relative who

had just announced his arrival in Berlin. In other words, I was fired. However, one of my host's brothers was so indignant at this lack of understanding for a young man of talent that he decided to make it up to me. He said, "Now, Schnabel, don't worry. Go to any hotel you want and I'll pay for everything." So I chose a hotel where a girl friend of mine from Vienna was staying—and I still don't know whether Mr. Cassirer ever guessed the reason for my choice.

I SPOKE of the atmosphere in Vienna, of the defeatism and a certain morbidity in the nineties and a kind of withering. Berlin was just the opposite. There was an atmosphere of growing confidence, activity, alertness—and while in Vienna the character of public life was dominated by the aristocracy, in Berlin it was the self-made man who put his stamp upon the city.

In appearance, of course, by comparison with Vienna, Berlin was much less attractive. It had neither the beautiful architecture nor the enchanting surroundings, and in elegance it could not compete with Vienna. Nor were the people as polite, as pleasant, as superficially amiable—yet the much-maligned German virtue of obedience (as long as it was not abused) had a certain value. The Viennese middle and lower class, for instance—the Austrian in general—was not obedient but servile, which to me seems worse.

Conditions in Berlin—more than elsewhere in Germany—were rather characteristic of a more or less suddenly prosperous society. The Germans had been successful throughout the 19th century, with hardly a reversal since the Napoleonic Wars. When I came there in 1900, they were near the crest of this optimistic wave. In the next fourteen years, there was a very gradual, but to a sensitive person quite unmistakable, transition from optimism to nervousness. Germany seemed to become so strong that her very strength made her more arrogant, and her arrogance more nervous. When the young Kaiser came to power, he was rather pompous and bombastic, a capricious fool

(that's not my judgment; that is how the Germans regarded him) and therefore dangerous. After firing Bismarck he kept upsetting world politics until finally England, France, and Russia entered into an *entente cordiale*. This in turn made Germany feel that it was suddenly encircled by enemies—and that was how it came to the First World War.

I think that the world had a rather mistaken idea of regimentation in 19th-century Germany. Any notions derived from National Socialism's later actions give an absolutely false picture. For instance, in Berlin under the Kaiser, the court did not count at all. It was always ridiculed. The Kaiser often made very odd statements that were quite fearlessly poked fun at in the press. Once, at the opening of an official art exhibition, he received the painters and sculptors in the palace and delivered a speech to them in which he said, "Art which exceeds the limits I have drawn is no art." You must not think that anyone in Germany took that seriously.

The German lieutenant—the essence of the military spirit—was a public laughing-stock. There was one magazine in particular, the *Simplicissimus*, published in Munich, a so-called comic paper, but not in the sense that we know over here; it treated all functions, actions, and events which its editors considered harmful, dishonest, or rotten, with the most biting and convincing wit. The main target was the ruling classes—the Junkers, for instance, with some of whom I, too, had come into contact.

The Prussian nobility had its faults but also its great virtues, and the bureaucracy was neither slovenly nor corrupt. Corruption did not exist among German bureaucrats, and slovenliness didn't, and laziness didn't. They were a rather dull people, not too lively but very reliable, absolutely reliable. That may have been why the business leaders, working as they did from morning until night, left politics and government to these traditionally reliable people. So did the scholars, professors, and teachers, who did not participate in public life, either. They

went on with their work and left government and politics in the hands in which they had always been.

Thus, with a century of success behind them, the Germans finally became so confident and optimistic that they thought things would always go on in this way. But with growing competition, and the growing efficiency of Germany in this competition, it could not go on and, as I said, the competition and the arrogance finally produced a collision.

PERSONALLY, I enjoyed my first ten years in Germany immensely. I was received in a new way. I saw some hope for myself and yet, having no teachers any longer, I was even lazier than before. I did not have to prepare anything for lessons, so I really wasted an enormous amount of time just idling. In Vienna, where the majority of the population spent more time in coffee houses than anywhere else, I had not taken up this national vice—maybe I was too young, or simply not attracted—but I made up for this in Berlin, though only at night. I would play billiards and cards and then sleep until two o'clock the next day. I lived in a rather proletarian neighborhood, with a Viennese friend who was two years older than I and an apprentice in a bank; we were roomers in a cobbler's flat.

Through letters of introduction I met three ladies, all in their early thirties or thereabouts and married respectively to a big publisher, a big steel manufacturer, and a banker. They studied music very seriously and asked me to give them lessons. I was then seventeen and new in Germany, and it was really wonderful to have these three pupils. I also remember a young man who was always ailing and had to stay at home. He asked me to play for him twice a week. Each time he paid me ten dollars or something like that, so you see I soon was standing on my own feet. I was fortunate also in having friends who invited me to have meals with them. Besides at that time in Berlin you could go to a kind of cafeteria, and if you paid a nickel for a glass of beer

you could spend an hour eating very good rolls with mustard, for nothing. So, in emergencies, I would do that.

In those days, house concerts were still customary in Berlin and in the first years of my stay I was engaged to play at some such occasions. I remember a very unusual one at the house of the intendant of the Royal Opera. He asked me to play Mozart's *D Major Sonata* for two pianos, with Karl Muck. Not having heard much of Dr. Muck in Vienna, I was not even aware what an honor this was. It was a privilege and a great pleasure. Another time I was invited to play at the house of Prince Henckell-Donnersmarck, but was warned beforehand that the Princess was somewhat peculiar. I was summoned to her before the concert. She asked about my repertoire. I thought it rather strange when she told me that I was to play no Chopin—that her guests were accustomed only to the best and therefore would not like it from me. At that concert, the artists were separated from the guests by a rope, like animals in the zoo, and forbidden to mix—though when certain people from the other side of the rope came to talk with me, conversation proved possible. It was all very bewildering to me, and it was years before I heard from my agent that the Princess had cut my fee. Asked whether it was a mistake, she had said: "No, it happened on purpose. First, I didn't like his music, and secondly I didn't like his hair tonic."

DURING my first year in Germany I made a rather rapid career. I went on a concert tour through East Prussia. These concerts—especially in towns which really could be called only villages, with a few hundred inhabitants—were sponsored by the landowners of the region but organized by the state. The provincial administrator was in charge, so that wherever there was a garrison you would see an audience made up of the garrison commander, his wife, and all his officers and their wives, followed by judges, doctors, and civil officials. Sometimes the garrison also furnished the ushers, with an officer's orderly

or some retired sergeant in command. I remember one place where I played Beethoven's *Sonata in A Major, Opus 101*, and when I started the first movement, which is very delicate, the men who had been taking in the ticket money on a table behind the last row began to count the silver coins on china plates. I had to stop playing. Of course they were only doing their duty, but I have never forgotten what the German sergeant did to that concert. He knew no better.

One of my first concerts was in the small East Prussian town of Rastenburg. I traveled all night to get there, with a Belgian violinist, and I was very curious to meet a singer who was to star at the concert. Her name was Therese Behr, and she had been enormously successful in only the second or third year of her career. We were quartered at an inn which I cannot describe to you, having so far discovered nothing similar to such a place in the United States—where I have traveled widely. It was a very primitive place but not without a certain cosiness. When I arrived, there was still the smell of stale beer from an all-night wedding celebration. The porter took us up to our rooms, and in passing a door, I saw a lady's skirt and jacket. In those days you always used to hang your clothes before the door to be brushed and put your shoes out to be cleaned. The porter told me that this was the room of the singer, the star of the concert. I made a joke about the size of her boots. They were snow boots, as it was wintertime. Some hours later, at lunch, I met the lady. She laughed and said, "I heard you talk about my big feet." This greatly embarrassed me. We ought to have rehearsed then, but the weather was so fine and the countryside so inviting with all the deep snow that I said, "Shouldn't we go for a sleigh ride? It would be nice, and we can rehearse just before the concert."

She and the violinist agreed, and we got back just in time for a cup of tea. Then we went to the hall to rehearse. Much later, Miss Behr told me that it had been a strange rehearsal, because I insisted on playing my own compositions for her instead of rehears-

ing her songs. It made her a little nervous, but later I sight-read the music quite to her satisfaction and the concert went very well. A year later we were engaged, and five years later we were married.

IN THOSE years before the First World War, I performed in public chiefly in Germany and unfortunately spoke only the German language. I had learned some French, but not enough to make me risk going to a country where people spoke only French, and I did not speak English at all. So I traveled mostly in Germany (I think there is no German city in which I have not given one or several concerts), and elsewhere only on occasion.

I went to Spain two or three times, where the concert societies had rules more rigid than in any other country. First of all, only members were allowed to attend. There was no way for an artist to get tickets for his friends, even though quite often only half the members came and he played to a half-empty house. The philharmonics in Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, and other places had up to 2,000 members and a waiting list of thousands more—although if any of the 2,000 died, their memberships went automatically to their children and not to the people on the waiting list. Then, at these concerts, the audience was requested not to talk. Talkers were threatened with exclusion; their membership was in danger. Also, they were not to leave before the music had ended. Encores were forbidden although they were safe with me in that respect, for I do not play encores, anyhow. The programs were decided by committees of a few gentlemen, who often chose what were considered the most inaccessible works of musical literature. It was all so exclusive that neither the performer nor the audience felt too happy in these Spanish concerts—yet I went back repeatedly; Spain is such a lovely country, particularly in the north.

In 1904 I went to England and had the great honor to play at the Royal Philharmonic Society, where I had a remarkable success. But what I best remember is my

trip to the concert. Not used to London traffic, I took a hansom cab much too late, and at each busy corner, where we had to wait longer than I had ever waited in Berlin or Vienna, I became more and more nervous and afraid of being late for the concert.

Occasionally I went to Italy and France, rarely to Scandinavia, but fairly often to Austria, chiefly to Vienna, the city where I had grown up, and to Prague and Budapest. I never liked to play in Vienna. I don't know whether this was a resentment or an inhibition—but I never felt happy with the Viennese audience, composed as it was mostly of talented philistines. Maybe I'm very unjust to them. I don't know. Maybe I am "emotional" in that respect.

Then, three times, I went to Russia—Czarist Russia. These trips were among my strongest impressions. The preliminaries were unpleasant, because Jews, as a rule, were not then admitted to Russia and I had to stand around in the Russian Embassy's ante-chamber with letters of recommendation. I did not like that at all. I did not see why a musician should be excluded because of his being a Jew. That was actually the only time when I really felt humiliated in regard to this distinction—if it is a distinction—of mine.

After the First World War I went back to Russia—now Soviet Russia—first in 1924, and later four more times. Strangely enough, it was not as different from Czarist Russia as you would believe. There were still the same Russians; of course they had different functions now and different conceptions, yet they were the same Russians. We should not think that social conditions decisively change men.

AMONG my intimate friends in Berlin were the Mendelssohns, with whom it was a century-old tradition to have music in their homes almost every day. There were two brothers, Robert and Franz, both bankers: Robert played the cello and Franz the violin. They had the finest Stradivarius instruments in existence. The sounds they produced on their instruments were not, however, the

finest; I have heard finer sounds on inferior instruments. However, they were eminent amateurs.

In 1911 or 1912 there was much publicity and noise about a prodigy in composition said to be comparable only to Mozart. His name was Korngold; his father was music critic for the leading Viennese newspaper. The works of this eleven- or twelve-year-old boy were really amazing, and I gave the first performance of a sonata which he wrote at thirteen. Of course such valuations are always relative, for automatically you can't help judging a work by a thirteen-year-old boy differently from one by a sixty-year-old man, but I still think that even today, if one can see it in this perspective, it is a most amazing piece. For many years now Erich Wolfgang Korngold has been writing music for motion pictures, and he probably is not too happy doing it. We are still intimate friends and I am still his admirer—and under the impression that he is now on his way back to his first love.

Also during this Berlin period, in 1905 or later, there was the first triumph of Max Reinhardt. He started out with the most delicate and concentrated performances of certain plays—I remember them all, because I went to every one of them. But not long after his brilliant beginnings he turned partly to show business, and there failed to maintain his first sensational and well-deserved success. He ended in Hollywood, teaching and producing. He died a few years ago in New York. He was a great man.

MY FIRST son was born in 1909 and my second son in 1912, so they were babies when the First World War broke out in 1914, after the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, had been assassinated with his wife in Serbia (or rather in Bosnia, which had previously been annexed by the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy). I was told—and I have always believed that this is a plausible interpretation of the events leading up to this assassination—that the Hungarian magnates succeeded one day in obtaining a law from the Aus-

trian-Hungarian government under which no Serbian hogs could be imported any longer, as they were competing with the Hungarian hogs. Before that, Serbia had been a close friend and protégé of Austria-Hungary; but now the poor Serbians (then generally considered the best people in the Balkans) did not know what to do with their hogs; they had no access to the sea and were simply encircled, so finally the only way out was Russia and Pan-Slavism, and that was how it came to anti-Austrian propaganda and to this assassination.

When that happened, Germany thought it was a marvelous opportunity for her. From 1910 on, Germany had become much more irritable and aggressive. For instance, I have never traveled on a German train without witnessing a quarrel, even if only about opening or closing a window. (In contrast, I have never heard a quarrel while traveling in England. An Englishman will endure everything, you see, and if someone else opens a window he will catch pneumonia without saying a word.) But the Germans, after that assassination in 1914, thought, "That's wonderful—now we can have the war we want." So they forced Austria to put conditions to Serbia which Serbia could not accept without losing her honor completely. Why the Austrian government did it is not quite clear; maybe they overrated German invincibility just as it has since been overrated a second time.

Well, as you know, this war ended in Austria's defeat, disintegration, and dissolution. But the Germans defeated Russia in 1917, and they thought that their victory would be more complete if they brought Mr. Lenin from Geneva to Russia in a sealed train, to foment revolution in addition to the defeat. You know the consequences. At the time it seemed quite a good trick. The Germans proved perfectly right in their expectation that England and other capitalist countries if victorious would not let Germany go down but would pamper her again, in order to kill these Bolshevik Russians whom Germany herself had brought to Russia. The rest you know.

DURING the First World War, I had a chance to see some of the workings of the German General Staff. I had some contact with Major Joachim, a son of Joseph Joachim, the famous violinist and director of the Prussian Academy of Music, one of the greatest and most influential figures in musical life between 1850 and 1900. I knew Major Joachim as a very friendly man; he was married to a charming French violinist and I was a guest at their house a number of times. The chief of the General Staff, Count von Moltke, was addicted to occultism and spiritualism, and occasionally spiritualist seances of a sort were held at the major's house—perhaps to please his superiors. I did not feel quite at ease at such meetings, but it did impress me to see Prussian Junkers deeply engaged in these mystic rituals, and I thought that it revealed something of the strange blending in the upper-class German, who succeeded in being methodical, aggressive, and mystical all in one.

In 1914 the Kaiser, in an address to his people, made the amazing statement that he no longer knew any parties but only Germans. This inspired the formation of a club guided chiefly by Walter Rathenau—a big industrialist whom I knew fairly well. He had great integrity and a brilliant mind; he was versatile, an idealist and a liberal, but not entirely free from a rather snobbish resentment which ate at him. What irked him most, I think, was to have been born a Jew. He always seemed to feel that inhibition. In his case, as in that of another exceptionally gifted man I happened to know, the effect was twofold: either they were plagued by an inferiority complex or by megalomania. They felt inferior or they felt superior, and there never was the right balance and development.

I joined this organization of Rathenau's. It was representative of all sorts of activities. A good many of the people in charge were Social Democrats, and the meetings, discussing conditions in general and occasionally even music, were rather productive. I remember these evenings during those scin-

tillating years with much pleasure and gratitude.

However, when the United States entered the war in 1917, this unity, this desire and willingness for unity, was rapidly destroyed, because confidence of winning the war was rapidly weakened. Then the diehards, or isolationists, or reactionaries, came to the fore, and in 1917 I remember attending the inaugural meeting of the Fatherland party—which I did not join. I don't remember having ever felt as ashamed and disgusted, except on the night in 1924 when the German Alpine Society, of which I had been a member for 25 years, met in Berlin to decide that henceforth the number of Jews to be admitted would be limited; then I realized that ours was a generation so demoralized as to draw even music and mountains into its sordid prejudices.

The inaugural meeting of the Fatherland party left me with one particular recollection: I remember the terrific shouting. (There was no public address system at that time.) The speakers were all very prominent people, and one, the mayor of one of Germany's largest cities, shouted, "Germany will lose unless she follows the example of the enemy who has no scruples and shrinks from no lies. The Germans are much too honest in their propaganda, and their only chance to improve their situation is to surpass their enemies in lying." That's exactly how it was—and I shall not forget it for the rest of my life.

DURING the war, living conditions became rather unusual. For instance, we had none of the foods which here are considered absolutely indispensable to good health, or even survival. There was no milk, no butter, no chocolate, no jam, no white bread, etc. I don't know how we got along. I know that my jaws, after chewing war bread for three years, one morning went on strike. They simply refused to work. I actually had no right to complain; in my privileged position, I was traveling a great deal, to all the countries not at war with Germany which could be reached without passing

through countries that were. From these countries, living in plenty, I was allowed to take or send supplies home.

In April 1915 I gave a concert in Milan, Italy. It was very unpleasant because at that time Italy had decided to join the enemies of Germany, after having been a German ally for decades. The people were violently aroused, or ordered to be, against anything or anybody coming from Austria or Germany. Having lived in Germany throughout the war, I was insulted by the pro-Allied press of every neutral country I visited as a musical representative of Prussian militarism. The reviews I got in such newspapers were simply not quotable—a lexicon of insults. One man in Amsterdam, after I had played there, started his forty lines of billingsgate by saying that to hear me was not worth the wear on his galoshes, and ended by saying that the doll in *Tales of Hoffman* had more soul and animation than I. He asked why I was not a sergeant at the German front, said that my performance was like a living page of Kant or Hegel—a most generous choice—and then he topped it all off by saying that I played like a convict counting peas. This, I have since come to take for a great compliment: I always repeat it to my students, and often when they blur figures or play slovenly I ask them to play like a convict counting peas.

In the third year of the war, when the German military authorities were getting very suspicious of the Austrian military authorities for their failure to pursue the war with the same energy and zest as the Germans displayed, I had to present myself once more for service. The old doctor who examined me said, "I know you've been here before, and we always rejected you because there was something wrong with your foot, so you can't stand long marches."

I replied "Oh, no, I'm a passionate mountaineer. I've done all kinds of climbing in the Alps." (Afterwards, I realized that there should be limits even to the passion for honesty.)

So the man had no choice but to accept

me. That, of course, got me into a terrible mess. I was then near forty, but I still don't quite know how I escaped service. The German Foreign Office very kindly claimed me for propaganda in foreign countries, and that worked for a while. But then the military authorities refused to acknowledge that, and I was examined again by a German officer, not a doctor, who told me that wearing the Kaiser's uniform was a higher honor, and a more important one, than art or any spiritual value could be. However, somehow I still escaped, because when the Germans asked the Austrians for my files and data, the Austrian Foreign Office was sensible and charitable enough to answer always that they could not be found—after months of searching, of course. So the war came to an end without my being drafted.

I had other troubles, though. For instance, one day Her Royal Highness the Crown Princess was the patroness of the 2000th performance of *Blossom Time*, and some lieutenant in charge of this charity performance had the splendid idea of having me appear, dressed as Schubert, to play one or two pieces. When they told me that, I really thought, blasphemously, that I'd rather have gone to war. Luckily, however, I had an extremely intelligent friend in Berlin employed in a high position in the Foreign Office. I went to him, rushed to him, and poured out my heart. I said, "I don't know—I think it's a kind of suicide. I simply can't do that. I'll play as many Schubert sonatas for the Crown Princess as she likes, but I can't appear in *Blossom Time*."

So he got me out of it, and I think he even rebuked the lieutenant whose idea it had been. Then, I remember, he wrote me a delightful letter which said, "Isn't it good that higher intelligence always goes with the higher office?"

ON NOVEMBER 6, 1918, I played a trio recital in Bonn, Beethoven's birthplace. It was a pleasant concert and we had an even more pleasant supper at a hotel where they served very good wine. At midnight

the headwaiter came to our table and said there had been a phone call from Cologne about the outbreak of a revolution. Just that. You see, that's the way it goes; if you ever experience the outbreak of a revolution you may expect it in the same way—a headwaiter will come and say there has been a phone call about a revolution.

Well, of course I got nervous. On November 8, I had a recital scheduled in Kassel; it was not far to Kassel, but a new revolution, a very young revolution, was just beginning, and I did not know how I would get there. So I asked the headwaiter, "What would you advise me to do?"

He said, "I would take the first train in any case—if any train is going to Cologne tomorrow morning."

So that was what I did. When I got to Cologne there were thousands of people standing about the station with all their luggage—sheer anarchy. Being a pianist, and always careful not to overstrain my hands, as all pianists are, I could not carry my luggage alone, so I stood there with the thousands of others and watched what was happening. What was happening was that young soldiers of 15 or 16 walked up to generals and colonels without saying a word, cut off their epaulets and took away their sabers. The generals did not say a word, either. It all happened smoothly, silently, as if an order were being carried out. It was very interesting.

Finally some old railway employee took pity on me and said, "Do you want a porter? Do you want to check your luggage?"

I said that would be heavenly and he said, "Now, I'll take care of it. You come here every hour and ask whether any train will leave Cologne."

I said, "All right, I'll do that."

"However," he said, "as far as we know, no train will leave Cologne." In the ticket hall I saw small pyramids of broken rifles and carbines. The rifles had been broken into two pieces and stacked very neatly. Then they were loaded on trucks and dumped into the Rhine, which was flowing nearby. That's how a revolution goes, you see.

As I left the station I faced the majestic and quite undisturbed cathedral just opposite, and to the left, on the big, very new Rhine bridge, I saw the whole action directed by five or six fanatical-looking sailors from the naval base at Kiel who wore red carnations and were making a revolution.

I THOUGHT, "What shall I do?" I walked and watched the revolution. I didn't see much revolt but, anyhow, something unusual was happening. There was some distinct and extraordinary atmospheric vibration. Every hour I went to the station to find my old man, but no train was leaving so I went to the Hotel Excelsior and had a very good lunch. Others were also lunching there peacefully, unaffected by the revolution. Finally, when I returned to the station in the afternoon, my friend said, "There's a train leaving at four. She's going to Kassel." And I exclaimed, "That is really a miracle, because that's just where I have to go."

However, this train was expected to be very full. In fact, it already was full. There was no getting into my car by the door, so a man had to lift me through a window into the compartment. I had a first-class ticket, which normally would have entitled me to sit in a compartment with only three other people, but when I was lifted in there were ten or eleven soldiers of all ages occupying the four seats, so we squeezed together good-naturedly for the long, slow journey.

Now these soldiers—all ten or eleven of them—were men who at the first word of a revolution had left some hospital or jail. They had all been either hospitalized or imprisoned, and I got a little nervous when the two I was sitting between continually took quinine pills and told me that they had malaria. Then I saw that all these soldiers were equipped with and carried new things. I said, "I'm curious—did you buy all these things for your wives and families?"

"Well," they said, very naively and innocently, "there was a revolution, so we

just went to the department stores and took." And so it goes.

At 1 AM I arrived in Kassel and went to a hotel where I had a reservation. Everything was in order. The town was quiet; the revolution had not yet come to Kassel. I went to bed. In the morning I tried to find out from the hotel manager whether or not my recital would be held. He said, "Nobody can tell. Nobody knows anything."

It was drizzling rain, I remember. I went out to see how Kassel was taking the revolution and the end of the war. It was dull, dreary, and sleepy. Somebody gave me a handbill which said to come to the main square at noon; I went and saw children playing, having a good time. There were also some twenty or thirty thousand people in the square, waiting for something.

A few minutes after noon a car came racing up with five sailors in it—the same or similar to those I had seen before—and one civilian who stood up in the car and said, "The Kaiser has abdicated."

What happened then is absolutely indescribable. These 30,000 people acted as if from now on there could be no doubt about the rosy future of mankind. There was instant relief in their faces, and they seemed to think that all of their own troubles also were over. My recital took place. It was sold out.

Next morning I took a train for Goettingen and gave a matinee recital, and on the following day, November 10, I arrived in Berlin. Meanwhile I had called my family by telephone from Goettingen, and my wife told me that in Berlin the revolution had come on November 8 (which was a Sunday, I think)—when she had promised to take our two little boys to the opera to see *Hansel and Gretel*. She was advised to stay at home that afternoon, but the children were so unhappy that she could not bear to disappoint them and so they saw *Hansel and Gretel* on the day of the revolution, and enjoyed it very much.

THE MONTH IN HISTORY

UN—Solomonic Judgment

THE majority of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine was able to claim, with some show of justice, that it was not dividing Palestine by any Solomonic sword but merely recognizing the fact that it had already been divided by the swords of Jews and Arabs. Indeed, this was the basic argument on which it rested its recommendations. For it declared:

"The basic premise underlying the partition proposal is that the claims to Palestine of the Arabs and Jews, both possessing validity, are irreconcilable and that among all the solutions advanced partition will provide the most realistic and practicable settlement and is the most likely to afford a workable basis for meeting in part the claims and national aspirations of both parties. . . .

"The basic conflict in Palestine is a clash of two intense nationalisms. Regardless of the historical origins of the conflict, the rights and wrongs of the promises and counter-promises and the international intervention incidental to the mandate, there are now in Palestine some 650,000 Jews and some 1,200,000 Arabs who are dissimilar in their ways of living and, for the time being, separated by political interests which render difficult full and effective political coopera-

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tion among them, whether voluntary or induced by constitutional arrangements. . . . Partition is based on a realistic appraisal of the actual Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine. Full political cooperation would be indispensable to the effective functioning of any single state scheme, such as the federal state proposal, except in those cases which frankly envisage either an Arab or a Jewish dominated state. . . .

"Jewish immigration is the central issue in Palestine today and is the one factor, above all others, that rules out the necessary cooperation between the Arab and Jewish communities in a single state. The creation of a Jewish state under a partition scheme is the only hope of removing this issue from the arena of conflict."

Like the various commissions of inquiry which had preceded it, the UNSCOP—majority and minority alike—appeared unimpressed by the traditional Zionist contention that Arab opposition to Jewish immigration and the creation of a Jewish state was an artificially stirred up phenomenon, without roots in the Arab masses.

The Jewish State

If, as the Committee held, the creation of a Jewish state by partition was necessary to permit free Jewish immigration, it became quickly obvious that only substantial Jewish immigration would prevent the "Jewish" state laid out in the majority report from acquiring an Arab majority in short order. Indeed, on the UNSCOP's own figures, the population of the proposed Jewish state was currently composed of 500,000 Jews as against 416,000 settled Arabs and 90,000 Bedouins. There would undoubtedly be a Jewish electoral majority, however, because the percentage of adults among Palestinian Jews was much higher than among the Arabs. Moreover, the Jewish vote would be substantially increased by that provision of the report under which the Jews and Arabs

of Jerusalem could vote only in the Jewish or Arab state, respectively. Nevertheless, the Arab rate of natural increase so far exceeded that of the Jews that only continued large-scale immigration could prevent the Jews of the "Jewish" state from eventually becoming a minority.

Such a flow of immigration would imply both a steady supply of potential immigrants and the possibility of their settlement in Palestine. On a long-term basis, neither could be completely assumed. There could, of course, be little doubt that if the doors of Palestine were opened wide today, and facilities provided for all who might wish to enter, many hundreds of thousands of Jews from Eastern Europe would pour in. But this did not mean that Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe would still be available to populate Palestine ten years hence. For by that time, it seemed likely, the Jewish population of Eastern Europe would be either integrated into some sort of normal economic life, or decimated. In neither case were there likely to be many potential emigrants, even if these countries did not follow the example of Russia and close their borders, as it seemed probable that they would.

Moreover, the Committee's report gave little ground for assuming any large-scale economic absorptive capacity on the part of either the projected Jewish state or Palestine as a whole. For, while it nowhere attempted any detailed estimates on the possibility of expanding agriculture, industry, and trade in Palestine, the Committee did point out a number of factors tending to limit these.

Thus, it declared: "Broadly speaking, any further considerable development of agriculture in Palestine must rely on a more intensive use of the land by irrigation, rather than an extension of the area of cultivation. . . . Irrigation has been greatly developed in recent years and the limits of development have by no means been reached. Nevertheless, its extension on a considerable scale presents difficulties of cost and of water supply, for Palestine, unlike Egypt, has no great river flowing through its territories carrying water from catchment areas beyond its own boundaries. . . . It depends upon the annual precipitation within its own boundaries and in the Syria-Lebanon catchment area, from which the Jordan is partly fed at its source. The major sources

of water available for irrigation are springs and rivers, wadi storm water, and underground water from wells and boreholes. . . . There is, however, no disagreement on the fact that Palestine is not very bountifully supplied with water. . . ."

Discussing Palestine's industrial possibilities, the Committee declared: "In the physical resources which are typically the basis of modern industrial development, Palestine is exceedingly poor, having neither coal nor iron nor any other important mineral deposit. Indeed the only considerable non-agricultural resources are the potassium and sodium salts which are extracted from the Dead Sea. . . . Broadly speaking, the industries which have taken root in Palestine are either consumption-goods industries based to a great extent on the local market, industries whose location is not determined by the presence of raw materials but which depend on local skill as in the case of the diamond industry, or in some few cases, as for example the potash industry and some food-processing industries, those which depend on local raw materials. It must be remembered that almost all of these industries are small-scale enterprises."

Of the Palestinian economy as a whole, the report said: "Palestine depends on foreign trade to secure, by import, food (especially wheat, meat and cattle fodder), raw materials, machinery and equipment which have been and are essential to its development. The finance of these imports is only partly covered by exports. There remains, indeed, as a persistent feature a remarkably large balance of imports over exports which is financed by imports of capital consisting mainly of funds coming from world Jewry, capital brought in by immigrants and funds coming to religious institutions. During and since the war there has also been a very large military expenditure by the British government."

Nor was a particularly roseate future to be deduced from its comment that: "Costs of food production on Jewish mixed farms in Palestine are relatively high and the pressure to maintain industrial wages is in consequence very strong, and since the rise in industrial wages has not been altogether offset by increases in output per worker, the labor costs of Palestine industry are high. When the world shortages of consumer

goods are overcome, Palestine industry will be subject, both at home and in external markets, to the competition of lower cost production. To the extent that a fall in food prices would permit a fall in wages, this situation would be improved with a fall in world wheat prices since Palestine at present imports wheat from other Middle East countries at very high prices. . . .

"It remains, however, to consider that a considerable fall in military expenditure would bring about a fall in income and in prices unless offset by investment from other sources.

"Should this occur, a period of economic depression and unemployment would be the natural consequence. Thus the Palestine economy may be expected in the near future to have to adjust itself to the double effect of increasing industrial competition and a fall in income as a result of the reduction of military expenditure."

If one accepted the accuracy of the Committee's findings, it was difficult to see how the proposed Jewish state would be capable of supporting a population much larger than it at present contained. But, given these findings, it was easy to understand why the Committee concluded that it was "incontrovertible that any solution for Palestine cannot be considered as a solution of the Jewish problem in general." The economy of the Yishuv itself was clearly going to be dependent, for a long time to come, on the contributions of the Diaspora. And for that, if for no other reason, the Diaspora had to be preserved in a reasonably flourishing condition.

The Minority Report

The factual findings of the UNSCOP were unanimous, and they were not favorable, in general, to the Zionist aspirations. But the majority, having presented them, proposed to offer the Zionists a state and let them try to make it work in the face of the difficulties which the Committee had pointed out. The minority, on the other hand, deduced from the factual findings the conclusion that neither a Jewish state nor unlimited Jewish immigration into Palestine could be justified in the circumstances.

The federal state proposed by the minority report was, in fact, scarcely more satisfactory to Zionists than would have been a unitary

state with an Arab majority. It certainly offered them far less than did the cantonal set-up projected in the Morrison-Grady plan. For the powers assigned the provinces of the proposed federal state were purely municipal in nature, with one significant exception, control over the right of residence. Since immigration—in contrast to the Morrison-Grady plan—was to remain a federal function, this meant that the Jewish province would be unable to admit Jews who were not previously Palestinian residents, and the Arab province would be able to bar those who were. And the minority's proposal for the central government, while striving to create a semblance of equality between Jews and Arabs, actually provided for permanent Arab dominance in the various organs of government.

It was perhaps not surprising that two of the signatories to the minority report, the representatives of India and Iran, were Moslems. It was suggested by some of the members of the Committee that the third, Mr. Simitch of Yugoslavia, represented the point of view of the Soviet Union. Mr. Simitch was reported, according to the *New York Times*, to have resented this bitterly, and to have declared that, so far from taking orders from the Soviet Government, he didn't even take them from his own.

The minority report did, however, come into conflict with the Arab point of view on one important question, since it provided for a transitional period during which Arab objections to Jewish immigration within Palestine's economic absorptive capacity might be overruled by international authority. This was sufficient to cause the Arabs to reject both reports, though of course concentrating their fire on the majority.

The UNSCOP and Human Rights

The Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry had, in its report, placed great stress on the international protection and extension of human rights. No such emphasis was to be found in the UNSCOP report. Indeed, it contained much that gave reason for disquiet.

However benevolent the Committee's intentions, there was at least a faint echo of racist anthropology, not basically different from that of the late Dr. Alfred Rosenberg,

in such statements as that of the majority that Jews and Arabs "are the sole remaining representatives of the Semitic race" and that "Palestine will be kept one land in which Semitic ideals may pass into realizations." The latter statement, in particular, appeared to imply that Jews and Arabs shared racial ideals quite alien to the Western world.

Perhaps even more important, majority and minority reports alike provided for the perpetuation, with the approval and indeed at the direction of the United Nations, of economic and political discriminations based on creed and descent. Some of these were perhaps inevitable concomitants of such racist-nationalist solutions as those proposed. This did not make them any easier to reconcile with traditional liberal concepts of fundamental human rights.

Thus, one objection to the White Paper of 1939 which all Jews, Zionist and anti-Zionist alike, had shared, was that it imposed restrictions on Jews as such. Both majority and minority reports, while abrogating some of the specific provisions of the White Paper, proposed to enshrine its basic illiberalism in international law. The majority report was even more specific than the minority on this point, since it declared that: "During the transitional period no Jew shall be permitted to establish residence in the area of the proposed Arab state, and no Arab shall be permitted to establish residence in the area of the proposed Jewish state, except by special leave of the administration."

Again, the minority report provided for the parceling out of official positions to Arabs and Jews *as such*, in a way that would assure against the possibility that the Jews might ever have a majority in any of the major divisions of the central government. Similar in nature, though perhaps less important, were the provisions of the majority report by which Arabs and Jews were to be barred from the governorship of the City of Jerusalem and from membership in the special police force entrusted with the protection of the holy places.

Jewish Reactions

No Arab had a good word to say, at least publicly, for either the majority or minority report. Among Jews, reactions were more varied. Irgunists and Sternists, demanding the whole of Palestine, rejected

both majority and minority reports and threatened to continue fighting until their demands were won—a disturbing commentary on the majority's belief that the finality of partition would pacify the contending parties. The Sternists, with straight faces, distributed leaflets at the UN warning that partition would result in the growth of reactionary and fascist forces in both states. And the Revisionists, from whose loins the terrorist groups had sprung, took advertisements in New York newspapers denouncing partition.

From the Left, Hashomer Hatzair continued to reject partition in favor of a binational state based on Arab-Jewish collaboration. Ahdut Avoda continued to prefer an eventual Jewish state in all of Palestine to an immediate one in part of it.

But the coalition of Labor Zionists, General Zionists, and Mizrachi, which controlled the Zionist executive, was ready to accept the majority report. In the case of most Labor Zionists and some General Zionists, the readiness was little short of eagerness. Among the leadership of American General Zionists, which had defeated Weizmann on the issue of his support of partition, acceptance tended to be grudging and critical. But it was still unmistakably acceptance, despite the strong trend in the direction of Revisionism which had long been observable in the Zionist Organization of America.

Outside of the Zionist movement proper, the American Jewish Committee urged the adoption of the majority report, recommending the Jewish state in the partitioned area, while at the same time it emphasized that it had never been Zionist.

In the anti-Zionist camp, the Agudas Israel reiterated its opposition to a secular Jewish state. And the American Council for Judaism, apparently loath to reject altogether anything that so many governments had agreed on, gave the Committee credit for a good try, while denouncing the idea of a state set up on religious lines and declaring that it would be incumbent on American Jews to differentiate themselves sharply from the inhabitants of such a state.

The Report in the UN

The fate of the report, however, was not likely to depend solely on the attitude toward it of the various Jewish organizations. It

would be determined by the positions of the major powers. And this in turn was likely to be far less influenced by their feelings in regard to Jews or Arabs than by their attitudes toward one another. In this respect, Britain seemed something of an exception. For she was so fed up with the Palestine question that she announced her intention of getting out from under in the absence of a solution agreeable to both Jews and Arabs.

But the United States and the Soviet Union were playing for keeps, and neither had any intention of giving the other any avoidable strategic advantages. For both, the delay permitted by the procedure of the United Nations offered a splendid opportunity for maneuvers designed to gain the support of the Jews without alienating the Arabs, or vice versa. The United States, being a democracy, was at a slight disadvantage in this game. This had not, however, prevented successive administrations from simultaneously championing the Zionists and reassuring the Arabs. Nor did it now prevent Secretary Marshall from wooing Zionist support by asserting that he gave "great weight" to the majority report, and subsequently assuring the representatives of the Arab states that he had "an open mind" on the subject. The Soviet Union, for its part, had prepared the ground for almost any move it might decide to make. For it had, at various times, championed immediate independence of Palestine as an Arab state, a bi-national solution, and, in the special session of the UN on Palestine, partition as a last resort. And, while it seemed probable that the Yugoslav delegate's signature to the minority report of the UNSCOP indicated the present temperature in the East, one had always to remember that the signatories of the majority report included Czechoslovakia.

In any case, as the opening of the UN debate drew near, few prophets could be found who saw any guarantee—despite the fact that most of the world was tired of the Palestine issue and seemed ready to accept almost any proposal which offered hope of a respite from an intolerable situation—that the report of the UNSCOP would fare any better than had all its predecessors.

Partition in Practice

Meanwhile, an object lesson in the effects of partition was being acted out in India.

It was hardly one to encourage the application of that solution elsewhere.

Constant agitation over the issue had led, in India, to a crescendo of rioting and terrorism. In the hope of securing an end to the disturbances and providing a "final" solution, Britain had proposed and the Congress party had accepted—as there seemed to be no chance that the Arab leaders would—partition of the country.

But with partition, conflicts between Moslems on one side and Hindus and Sikhs on the other had not come to an end. Rather, they had become general, and multiplied in scale. Where formerly hundreds had fallen, now millions were driven from their homes, tens of thousands were massacred—and this despite the appeals for peace by responsible leaders on both sides.

It might be that partition in Palestine would bring no such disaster in its train. To assert it with any confidence, however, seemed to require something of an act of faith. And it was an act of faith in which neither Hagana nor its Arab opponents appeared to participate, judging by the flow of arms into Palestine on all sides. Perhaps the one really hopeful aspect of the situation was that the Jewish Agency and Hagana, faced with the possibility that they might soon become the government and army of an independent state, were finally beginning to translate into action some of their declarations denouncing the terrorist groups. In this, they faced resistance from some sections of the General Zionists and Mizrahi, as well as from the Revisionists. Indeed, one American delegate from the Mizrahi declared at the Zionist Actions Committee meeting in Zurich that American Zionists supported the terrorists, and it was the leaders of the Zionist Organization of America who had insisted that action against the terrorists be limited to peaceful persuasion, and that an agreement be reached to incorporate them into the official Zionist movement. Be that as it may, Hagana was now placing guards to protect British installations against terrorist attacks, and it was informing the police of terrorist arms depots. Perhaps, if partition became a reality, it would be somewhat better prepared to protect the Arabs within the borders of a Jewish state than the governments of India and Pakistan had been to protect the minorities in their respective ter-

ritories. Perhaps, too, it would be able to restrain the ardor for expansion of those groups which were still unsatisfied with anything less than all of Palestine, while at the same time it would be able to defend the Jewish state from all Arab attacks. But it was a perhaps.

The United Nations

EXPLOSIVE as it was, and weary as they were of it, the Palestine question seemed likely to be regarded as a relatively pleasant interlude by most of the delegates to the United Nations Assembly before its present session was over. For there, at least, the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union entered the picture only obliquely, if none the less decisively. But on most of the other issues before the Assembly, the two powers which alone could determine the issue of war or peace faced each other in head-on opposition. So vehemently did they clash that many wondered how long the ties which held the UN together could stand the strain.

The delegates did not have long to wait before they were forced to confront the realities of life. Addresses of welcome are apt to deal in pleasant generalities. But Secretary of State Marshall required only two short paragraphs to pass on, from his formal greeting to the Assembly, to the declaration that "more than two years after the end of the war, the fruits of peace and victory are still beyond our grasp."

"Men look anxiously toward the future," he continued, "wondering whether a new and more terrible conflict will engulf them. We have not yet succeeded in establishing a basis for peace with Germany and Japan, nor have we restored Austria as an independent state. Reconstruction lags everywhere; the basic requirements of life are scarce; there is desperate need throughout great areas. The complex economic machinery which was thrown out of joint by the war has not yet been put back into running order. In place of peace, liberty, and economic security, we find menace, repression, and dire want."

Unfortunately, Secretary Marshall's picture of the state of the world was one with which no observer, whatever his political convictions or national loyalties, could disagree. But when he went on to enumerate

particular instances, assigning the blame for them and proposing remedies, he could hardly have expected to maintain "the unanimity of the great powers." Nor did he.

The Areas of Conflict

Turning first to Greece—a choice which some might have considered rather rash, despite the recent liberalization of that country's regime as a result of American advice—Secretary Marshall cited the findings of the UN's Investigating Commission that Greek guerrillas had been aided by the governments of Yugoslavia, Albania, and Bulgaria. He charged that: "One permanent member of the Security Council, however, has three times vetoed the efforts of the Council to deal with the situation."

Declaring that the inability of the Security Council to take effective action passed responsibility to the Assembly, the Secretary announced that the United States would submit to the Assembly a resolution containing a finding of responsibility, calling on Greece's neighbors to cease their aid to the guerrillas, and establishing a commission to assist in the implementation of the recommendations and investigate the facts in regard to compliance with them.

Continuing to the question of Korea, Secretary Marshall pointed out that the establishment of a provisional government for Korea had been blocked for two years by the disagreement of the United States and Soviet representatives on the USA-USSR Joint Commission which was supposed to establish this government. He therefore announced the intention of the United States to submit the question of Korean independence to the Assembly.

On atomic energy, he asserted that: "The preponderant majority of the Atomic Energy Commission has made real progress in spelling out in detail the functions and powers of an international control agency which would provide a framework for effective atomic energy control. Two nations, however, have been unwilling to join the majority in the conclusions reached. This is a disturbing and ominous fact. . . . If the minority persists in refusing to join with the majority, the Atomic Energy Commission may soon be faced with the conclusion that it is unable to complete the task assigned it." Touching on the question of control of conventional

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armaments, Secretary Marshall declared his belief that "a workable system . . . cannot be put into operation until conditions of international confidence prevail.... The regulation of armaments presupposes enough international understanding to make possible the settlement of peace terms with Germany and Japan, the implementation of agreements putting military forces and facilities at the disposal of the Security Council, and an international agreement for the control of atomic energy. Nevertheless, we believe it is important not to delay the formulation of a system of arms regulation for implementation when conditions permit." In terms of Secretary Marshall's criteria, it seemed likely to be a painfully long while before conditions permitted.

Then, turning to the most crucial issue of all, the Secretary discussed the use and abuse of the veto. He stated that the United States had been reluctant to encourage proposals for changes in the voting system in the Security Council, and had hoped that the permanent members would exercise restraint in the use of the veto. But, he declared, "The abuse of the right of unanimity has prevented the Security Council from fulfilling its true functions. This has been especially true in cases arising under Chapter VI [peaceful settlement of disputes] and in the admission of new members." He therefore urged the elimination of the veto in these two respects.

Finally, he proposed that the Assembly create a committee, representing all its member states, to act between its sessions. For this body he suggested the name of the Interim Committee on Peace and Security. The Charter of the United Nations gave jurisdiction over matters affecting the peace and security of the world to the Security Council, however. And Secretary Marshall specifically stated: "The Committee would not, of course, impinge on the matters which are the primary responsibility of the Security Council or of special commissions." Many observers, therefore, were not quite certain just what the purpose and function of the new body would be.

Mr. Vishinsky Indicts

Secretary Marshall probably did not expect his speech to be hailed by the representatives of the Soviet Union. But even he

may have been somewhat taken aback by the vehemence with which Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Vishinsky (perhaps best known as the prosecutor in the Moscow Trials of 1936-8) replied. Mr. Vishinsky's philippic against the Americans and British, some observers felt, would have been somewhat more convincing had the circumstances at Lake Success not been so unfavorable for obtaining confessions from those whom he denounced. But even so its vigor, if not its logic, was devastating.

He started off by asserting the duty of all delegations to act in a completely unprejudiced manner and maintain complete clarity, objectivity, and respect for truth. Fulfilling this obligation, he found himself regretfully compelled to inform the Assembly that the United States and Great Britain had seriously weakened the United Nations: first, by trying to use it for their own "selfish, narrowly conceived interests"; and second, by not using it, but acting outside its framework and without due regard to it.

Mr. Vishinsky went on to accuse the Anglo-Americans of being unwilling to disarm, and therefore blocking the activity of the Commission on Conventional Armaments. To support this thesis, he referred to, but did not directly quote, speeches by Secretary Bevin and President Truman. He then asserted that, with the aim of contributing to a positive solution of the problem of atomic weapons, the Soviet had submitted a proposal dealing with the international control of atomic energy. "Nevertheless," he complained, "that proposal met with a resistance, mainly on the part of the United States." Perhaps to spare their feelings, Mr. Vishinsky failed to point out that nine of the other eleven members of the Atomic Energy Commission had joined the Americans in obstructing the acceptance of the Russian proposals. "Naturally," he declared, "one cannot expect successful results from the work in which there is shown on the part of some delegation no intention to cooperate. . . . Such a situation cannot be suffered."

The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall plan, Mr. Vishinsky held, were "particularly striking instances of the violation of the United Nations Organization principles and of ignoring the organization." He said that the Marshall Plan was "but another version of the Truman doctrine" which sought to

force the countries of Europe "to give up their inalienable right to dispose of their own economic resources, to plan their own national economy as they see fit." Pointing out that some European countries had resisted this "infringement of their sovereignty" by staying away from the Paris conference—he modestly neglected to mention the Soviet Union's part in encouraging this demonstration of independence by such nations as Poland and Czechoslovakia—he went on to assert: "At the same time, this plan is an attempt to break Europe into two camps and complete with the assistance of Great Britain and France the formation of a bloc . . . hostile to the interests of the democratic states of Eastern Europe."

Charging that British troops still remained in Greece, Egypt, and Transjordan, and American troops in China, Mr. Vishinsky demanded their evacuation in the interests of peace and international confidence. He recalled the failure of Argentina to carry out the decisions of the Assembly in respect to Spain, and South Africa's continued discrimination against her Indian residents and failure to establish a trusteeship for Southwest Africa. And he emphasized the failure of the United Nations to take effective action to assist the people of Indonesia in resisting Dutch aggression. At the same time, he complained, the United States and Britain insisted on keeping the Iranian question on the agenda of the Security Council despite its complete settlement.

Turning to Secretary Marshall's speech, Mr. Vishinsky stated that the veto protected the interests of all powers, great and small, and the Soviet Union would resist any attempts to undermine it. On Greece, he asserted that "the very raising of this question is devoid of any foundation." On Korea, he charged that by submitting the question to the Assembly, Secretary Marshall was violating the agreement of the United States to work out an agreement jointly with the USSR. The proposed Interim Committee, he held, was an attempt to by-pass the Security Council. And on all these points he promised to speak further when the individual questions came up in the Assembly.

Next, he turned to what he termed "the war psychosis instigated by the efforts of the militarist and expansionist circles of certain countries, the United States of America

occupying the foremost place among them." He charged that press, radio, and cinema were all engaged in a campaign to prepare public opinion to support a new war. After asserting that "in this propaganda of a new war the most active part has been assumed by the representatives of American capitalist monopolies" he declared that its promoters included "not only prominent representatives of . . . industrial and military circles, influential organs of press, and prominent politicians, but official representatives of American government as well." He then specifically named nine individual Americans and a number of publications and institutions as war-mongers. To this list he added others from Great Britain, Turkey and Greece. "And all this," he said, "goes unpunished in the eyes of the whole world."

The Common Man

Hector McNeil of the United Kingdom replied in detail to Mr. Vishinsky. Listing nine nations with which the Soviet Union had been in dispute, he questioned the likelihood that the Soviet government had "all the right and all the wisdom [on its side]." And he added: "But if the Soviet government—and I say unfortunately we can only talk of the Soviet government, because we have small means by which we can know of the Soviet people—if the Soviet government considers that it can in all situations have its will prevail, if it considers that in all areas its power must be extended, if it thinks that in describing any international situation its description must be accepted, then I say without qualification that not only will the United Nations as we know it be destroyed, but the unstable peace of the world will crumble and crash."

And, appealing to the delegates to remember that they represented the common men of the world, he concluded: "For a moment, a regime, a despot, a tyrant may prevail against them, but it is only for a moment. . . . If we damage this Charter, if we harm it, if we fall short of it, if we come here brave in our power and our arrogance and our cunning, then for a moment we may succeed, but history, which is the common man, will . . . damn us forever."

But the common men of the world had never wanted war.

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

MAMA'S COOKING: MINORITY REPORT

A Heretical View of a Sacred Jewish Institution

HARRY GERSH

MY MOTHER was a bad cook. I realize this is a treasonable statement—treasonable to her memory and to one of our most hallowed traditions. But, unhappily, it is true.

In my defense let me say that it took me years to discover it, further years to admit it even to myself. "Like mother used to make" are words of great power; and time is a better sweetener than sugar. As the years pass, the remembered meats become juicier, the doughs fluffier, the grease is cut away. But there are certain facts that are tougher than memory, more stubborn than sentiment. Mother was a bad cook.

When the thought first struck me, I was shocked. Ma's cooking is enshrined in Jewish tradition, as well as in American folklore. Thousands of pretty pictures in magazine ads, subways, and billboards had taught me that motherhood was a higher cooking diploma than a *ruban bleu*. Brillat-Savarin was good, but he wasn't a mother. Even restaurants, competing with mother, eased the treason by boasting of "home cooking."

At first I thought that it was only my mother who was at fault. She had some per-

sonal failing or was poor at learning or didn't have the knack. After reaching the age of eating at friends' homes, I discovered that their mothers weren't so good either. As the "old country" backgrounds of the various mothers swung south from Latvia to Bessarabia, the spicing would change, but the food didn't. Now and then I came across an emancipated mother who had switched from *zauer zaltz* to lemon. It made no difference.

As my years increased, I grew bolder. I searched for causes. I could not dismiss the ads. They were gospel. So it must be the fault of the individual cook. I was not yet bold enough to question the entire school of Jewish cookery. By watching carefully I discovered that there were two classes of meals. First there were the *geshmake* meals. These were for holidays, Friday evenings, Sunday afternoons, and for guests. They included four different kinds of what the Italians call *pasta*, grain products; two meats; one or two rubbery glands or organs. The second class was the daily meals, composed of "healthy dishes"—boiled meat, boiled vegetables, boiled soup. The first meal was indigestible, heavy, greasy. The second was tasteless. There was a third class, too, the hurry-up meals and the meals for the times when the digestive system revolted. Then we got *milchediks*, cheeses, and sour cream dishes.

The standard or basic Jewish home meal, which we ate day in, day out, barring *shabbas* and *yomtov*, started with a *forshpeiz*. Some leftover *gefilte fish* did nicely, or if that *meichel* was all gone by Saturday, some chopped eggplant, marinated fish, or chopped

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liver. Then came the meat. For some reason the meat course was always based on a "good piece *mittel-chuck*." This cut is almost unknown to American butchers. Maybe it grew only on those animals fated for kosher killing. It was coarse-grained and, however lengthily boiled, it took a lot of chewing.

Then came the soup. Yes, in hundreds of thousands of Jewish homes in America during the first two decades of this century soup came after the meat. How else could you wash down the meal? Then dessert, boiled too—but of that more later. And then a second washing down, this time with tea. Boiling hot, and in a glass, of course.

To the occasional mild complaint about heaviness or lack of taste, my mother would say, "What can be bad with it, fresh meat, fresh vegetables, clean water? What can be bad?"

I didn't know.

I worked out sound economic and social reasons to explain the inclusion of some meats in the menu. In the old countries most Jews were poor, dietary laws restricted choice, etc., etc. And in this country there was the fact that "the store" had first claim on the time of most ma's, and this, perhaps, made boiled dishes—which didn't require watching—inevitable. But that didn't explain why our mothers made a virtue of rubbery spleens, lungs, intestines. Chewing gum was less harmful and it had candy on the outside, too.

ON THE days when the shortcomings of the cooking or baking became too obvious, my mother had a standard answer. Everyone's mother had the same alibi. "It's the stove," they would say. The genius of American industry to the contrary, there has never been a good, dependable gas range in the American home. I've heard the same complaint from a hundred practitioners of Jewish "home cooking." What was wrong with the stove, I never found out. The gas burned brightly, the valves regulated the heat, the oven had no leaks. But the stove was no good.

Cans were also objects of dark suspicion. They were poisonous. And if they weren't poisonous, they gave food a bad taste. Not all cans. Canned salmon and tomato herring were allowed. Economic determinism, probably. Canned vegetables or soups? Terrible.

Mother belonged to the modern school. She used canned tomato soup. Only Campbell's, of course. And only for the making of a special tomato and cabbage borscht. When this doubtful ingredient was used, extra precautions were taken. It was common knowledge that as soon as a can was opened a powerful poison was released that would seep into the can's contents from the sides. Therefore, whatever was in a can had to be taken out with the greatest dispatch. This held for the allowable cans, too, the salmon and tomato herring. When it was time to open a can, the table cloth was pushed back from a corner of the table. A plate or pot was placed close to the can. Then the can-opener was jammed into the cover and the can hurriedly jimmied open. As soon as the opening was large enough to see the contents, they were scraped out. Then mother would take the empty can to the window and peer into it doubtfully. To this day when given canned beer, I sip with suspicion. The insides of the can are sometimes black.

These home-cooked Jewish meals gave rise to a standard Jewish home pharmacopeia. Included were seltzer, bicarbonate of soda, Seidlitz powders, and citrate of magnesia. Public belching was, of course, forbidden. Except for rich uncles and grandfathers. But the tradition of the efficacy of the belch as a digestive aid was maintained. Hence the patented recipes. After a heavy meal, the adults would wander, one by one, to the bathroom. This treatment wasn't spoken about. People knew and took care of themselves. They would swallow the foaming drink and come out eased. When I was sixteen and highly conscious of the process, I used to hold my breath during the time between the ending of the spoon's tinkle and the belch.

The homegrown *refugees* were not taken haphazardly. Seltzer was for casual use between meals and for mealtime drinking, as a digestive aid, a warding off of trouble. Bicarbonate was for heartburn—real, imaginary, or "I shouldn't get it." Seidlitz powders were the digestive cure-all. They were efficacious in the treatment of any pain or discomfort between the chin and the groin. Citrate of magnesia was reserved for anything that could be classified as really sick. After citrate came the doctor.

Because of this constant awareness of the anticipated consequences of poor, under, over, or just plain eating, the desserts were designed for therapeutic effect. The recipes were traditional. My grandmother used them exactly as they had been handed down to her from *her* grandmother. Desserts had to be stewed fruit, preferably stewed dried fruit. Stewed prunes were the favorite weekday last course. The basic formula for this dish was universal, regardless of background. Litvak stewed prunes tasted the same as Rumanian stewed prunes. They were stewed prunes, no further description necessary. For special occasions—Friday evenings, holidays, guests—the recipe was broadened to include dried pears and apricots. For the well-to-do there were days when the dessert was stewed dried pears and apricots without the prunes. But this was plain ostentation.

EVENTUALLY, after much searching of soul and reckoning of cost, I faced it. In the interest of truth, I would have to accuse the two most sacred concepts in our creed—Jewish mothers and Jewish superiority. I had found out that my mother was not the only Jewish mother who couldn't cook. Joe's mother wasn't any better and Irving's was definitely worse. Research along Philadelphia's South Fifth Street and New York's Delancey Street bore out the traitorous conclusion. Jewish cooking in general was awful.

To be sure, this revelation did not necessitate the setting up of picket lines or the printing of leaflets or even the reading of papers before learned societies. It was merely something to be sadly accepted, like most unpleasant truths.

But truth is a hard taskmaster. It drove me to seek confirmation from my friends. In many cases, these friends quickly became enemies and soon I was asking questions of enemies who had never been friends. But I did find confirmation. Some gave it sadly, some bitterly, some brazenly, and some from behind guilty hands. Some preferred New England, some French, and some Chinese, but they all preferred something to mama's home cooking.

To be sure, the picture was not all black. The usual answer was, "The meals were pretty bad, except for. . . ." Everyone remembered some great delicacy that only his

mother or grandmother could make. Even I, apostate that I was, remembered some things with delight. Unfortunately, these remembered delicacies were not part of the weekly bill of fare nor even *spécialités de la maison*. They were, for the most part, special holiday dishes made once or twice a year, and absolutely impossible to get during the remaining fifty-one weeks.

Now I am a man who likes fried matzoh. My father liked fried matzoh and my sister liked fried matzoh. But we could eat fried matzoh only during Passover. We had *chumetzdi* matzoh the rest of the year. We used it for soup, instead of crackers, for jam, for lots of things. But we couldn't get fried matzoh except for *Pesach*.

A man I know has an unwholesome, almost sexual passion for chopped eggs. Not the tasteless stuff that comes as "a choice" to pickled herring on the appetizer list of a Jewish restaurant, but the real *pesachdi* chopped eggs with onions and chicken fat and a certain air. This dish also was reserved for one week during the spring. Yet eggs were plentiful and onions cheap and chickens well padded in other seasons.

Hamantoshen. I remember real Purim *hamantoshen*. Not the bread-dough triangles stuffed with gooey poppy seeds that disgrace the windows of Bronx bakeries. I mean *hamantoshen* in small tricorns of crisp, crumbly dough full to bursting with genuine *puhvedle*. *Puhvedle* that caused fights among the children as to who would lick the spoon, *puhvedle* made of prunes and nuts and strange, secret things. These *hamantoshen* were not bound by dietary laws. They were happy, joyous commemorative cakes. But ask for them in September and mother had an answer: "*Meshuge darf men zein*."

Some of the good things from mother's kitchen were monthly or even weekly affairs. These, too, were bound about with tradition. Take strudel, for instance. Strudel is something that only a grandmother can make. It is a pastry, a confection, a dream of ambrosia, but more earthy. But only a grandmother can make it. No biologist has discovered the chemical or hormone change that takes place when a grandchild is born and ripens when the child is able to eat strudel. It is just there. Countless mothers have watched as many grandmothers go through the processes that evolve into strudel. They have measured

and timed and written down. But to no avail. Mothers cannot make strudel.

WE WERE unfortunate. Other kids had grandmothers living with them, some had them around the block or across town. My grandmother lived a hundred miles away. Three or four times a year she would come to visit, carrying her own dishes because she didn't trust the *milchedik* and *fleishedik* differentiations in our house. She loved her grandchildren, but I think she came to make strudel. After the grandchildren were inspected and kissed, the children berated, and the tea and lemon sipped down, she would start the strudel. Grandma would roll up the sleeves of her *shabbasdike* dress, put on a clean white apron (colored or figured ones were bad for baking), and begin the grandmotherly task, spreading white flour on a board table, arranging a battery of bowls and boxes, and assigning the lesser tasks of shelling nuts, washing raisins, and paring apples. Slowly the delicacy would take form.

My mother would be moving nervously about all this time. It was her job to supervise the lesser aides and keep watch over grandmother's work. She didn't know what I knew. She thought it was a question of knowing ingredients and amounts and techniques. I could have told her. They weren't important. She would be able to make strudel too. But not yet. . . .

Lekach and sponge cake were within a mother's domain. Occasionally a grandmother would play around with these simple sweets, but that was only showing off or taking up the slack for an ill or overworked mother. Normally we judge baking or cooking by taste. Not sponge cake. This Friday specialty was spread before visitors and relatives during the weekend. The women guests would look at it critically. Each visiting female would pick up a piece and weigh it in her hand. Some would nod their heads up and down and some would shake them across. "It's nice and light" was the accolade. "It's not as light as last time" was the black hood. Mother, waiting apprehensively, would be ready with the second test. "A dozen eggs it took," she would offer. The judges would narrow their eyes to check the color of the cake and shake their heads again. "A dozen eggs. Fine. Fine."

Lekach was the other Friday evening goody. This nice honey cake was best described as something of which last week's version was better. What the original tasted like only the Lord knew and only he would have been good enough to eat it. Each week it was quite palatable and each week it was described as "Not as good as last week's."

One thing sponge cake and *lekach* had in common. They were the most fragile concoctions on earth. Once placed in the oven, the entire house was alerted. No walking, no sitting heavily, no closing of doors, no sneezing, no loud talking. Our oven could take the slightest sounds or jars, pick them up, translate them into tremendous shock waves and beat these waves against the cake. A child entering the house while baking was in progress would be met by mother on tiptoes with her finger before her lips and a whispered admonition. If, God forbid, a door slipped out of your hand, mother would come down on her heels, spread her arms, and look beseechingly upward. The second noise would cause her to wail, "*Farlossen dem lekach*." A third noise and she would let loose, "*In drehrd dem lekach*." That was serious.

IT MIGHT have been the stress placed upon the few sweets at home or it might have been the reaction from home cooking that made us haunt the corner candy-store.

Accordingly, and by a not too subtle dialectic, any account of Jewish cuisine should include a supplementary note on the traditional supplement to our diet—candy from the candy store.

For a penny we had a wide choice. To my mother there were only two choices: "a nice piece chocolate," or "poison." But she didn't know. She had lost the knowledge of candy by having children just as she hadn't achieved the knowledge of strudel by not yet having any grandchildren. We were the *mehven*, the authorities, on candy.

The one-for-a-cent had subdivisions, too. There were the good candies, nationally advertised, their size cut down by the cost of advertising, their flavor weakened by the food-and-drug acts. These included Mary Janes, Tootsie Rolls, Hersheys. The second group was more fascinating. We could get a tin dish full of pink taffy and a small tin spoon. The tin spoon always bent and broke

before all the taffy was gouged out and we would have to suck and scrape with our teeth. When I went home with a cut lip my mother couldn't immediately give me the "fighting with *shkutzim*" slap because I might be deserving of the "eating poison" shove.

Then there were long, two-foot strips of paper sprinkled with candy dots. The candy dots were in pink and green and were evenly spaced in two rows. They never came off the paper cleanly. With each dot we had to eat a small circle of paper. No one died from it.

I had three favorites. For my money the best buys included caramels, large black ones at three-for-a-penny and small paper-wrapped red and tan ones at seven-for-a-penny. These were movie fare. For ball playing and general sport use, sour balls were best. They kept well in pants pockets and they lasted a long time. The pocket mice that would stick to the surface of sour balls came off clean with one swipe of the tongue. In exotic moods, my penny went for burnt marshmallow. We could get two bananas of hard marshmallow, one white, one pink, or a Santa Claus of the same candy. With this sale we were entitled to one kitchen match. With the match we charred the outside of the marshmallow and ate the gooey drippiness, black and all.

To arouse the gambler's instinct and to ripen us for the baseball pool tickets and the ponies when we grew older, there were the chances. They were good. For babies there were grab bags. For that same single medium of exchange, the penny, you could get a small paper bag filled with stale, broken sweet crackers, an odd piece of candy, a

marble. These were good for movies too, but we didn't buy them openly after we passed six. Then there were the box chances. This device included row on row of small chocolate-covered creams. We would put our penny on the counter—penny first was obligatory in this transaction—and study the chocolates. The trick was to pick one that looked a little different, that had a bubble of chocolate sticking up or a small indentation. Some superstitious kids counted out, three down and three across or eeny-meeny. The choice made, we would slowly, carefully break the candy across the middle. If the inside was white, well, we had a piece of candy. If it was chocolate colored, we got a nickel-size bar. If it was red, then the heavens opened—we got a large Easter egg.

The "pull" involved real gambling. This game needed a crowd. No kid ever took a pull without calling the entire gang to watch. The gambler would approach the counter and demand in a loud, manly voice, "I want a pull." Then he laid his penny on the counter. The storekeeper would reach under the counter and bring up a fistful of long slim pieces of cardboard. One end of the cardboard was blank, the end he kept hidden in his hand had a number on it. After agonized debate and wishing and consultation, the choice was made and one cardboard sliver was pulled out of the hand. If the number of the paper ended in five, the gambler got a small Easter egg; if it ended in zero, a large Easter egg; if it ended in two zeros, a large doily-decorated box of candy. . . .

That's how it was in our house and on our street. The mind forgets, but the stomach remembers.

CEDARS OF LEBANON

ON THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

A Jewish Monastic Order of the 1st Century

PHILO

PHILO of Alexandria was the outstanding Jewish philosopher of the period during which the Jewish nation came under the influence of Hellenistic culture. Very little is known of his life. It is estimated that he was born around 20 B.C.E. It is also known that he led a deputation of Alexandrian Jews to Emperor Caligula in Rome to petition him to call a halt to the Roman persecution of Judaism. Philo received the education of an upper-class Greek, seems to have known little Hebrew and to have gained his knowledge of Judaism only by attending synagogue services and by observing the life of the Jewish community around him in Alexandria.

In his youth he wrote some purely philosophical treatises, and in old age two pieces of apologetics defending the Jews and describing their persecutions. But the greater part of his interest was taken up by the interpretation, in terms of Hellenistic culture and for Hellenized readers, of Jewish Law and tradition. Here he tried to reconcile Judaism with Platonic and Stoic ideas and the rationalism of Greek philosophy in general. Philo's thought is, hence, filled with contradictions and inconsistencies; and in the end he had more, much more influence upon such Christian sages as Clement and Origen than upon Jewish thinkers coming after him. Once the Jews withdrew themselves definitely and uncompromisingly from Hellenism, the fruits of the work of such Hellenized Jews as Philo were automatically excluded.

THE vocation of these philosophers is at once made clear from their title of Therapeutae and Therapeutrides, a name derived from *therapeuo*, either in the sense of "cure," because they profess an art of healing better than that current in the cities which cures only the bodies, while

Philo's treatise "On the Contemplative Life," which we publish in shortened form below, has aroused much controversy. A 19th-century German scholar, Lucius, thought it to come both from another hand and a later age than Philo's, arguing that it was in reality the description of a primitive Christian community. Lucius succeeded in winning many scholars over to his opinion, but since his time the textual criticism of Conybeare and Wendland, backed up by such reliable testimony as that of E. R. Goodenough of Yale and Hans Levy, have served to turn the tide the other way, and the bulk of responsible opinion now maintains Philo's authorship of the treatise.

Philo presents the Therapeutae as a counterpart to the sect of the Essenes, whom he had described elsewhere. Whereas the Essenes represent the practical ascetic life, one of action, the Therapeutae represent the contemplative ascetic life. In so far as Judaism never favored a radical split between contemplation and action, it could be said with some plausibility that the Therapeutae already manifested a quietist tendency in the Jewish life of that time which Christianity was shortly to capitalize upon more than Judaism.

The present translation is by F. H. Colson and is taken from volume IX of the Loeb Classical Library's edition of Philo's complete works. The excerpt is published here by permission of the Harvard University Press and William Heinemann, Ltd. of London—Ed.

theirs treats also souls oppressed with grievous and well-nigh incurable diseases, inflicted by pleasures and desires and griefs and fears, by acts of covetousness, folly and injustice and the countless host of the other passions and vices: or else in the sense of "worship," because nature and the sacred

laws have schooled them to worship the Self-existent who is better than the good, purer than the One and more primordial than the Monad. Who among those who profess piety deserve to be compared with these? . . .

[They] settle in a certain very suitable place which they regard as their fatherland. This place is situated above the Mareotic Lake on a somewhat low-lying hill very happily placed both because of its security and the pleasantly tempered air. The safety is secured by the farm buildings and villages round about and the pleasantness of the air by the continuous breezes which arise both from the lake which debouches into the sea and from the open sea hard by. For the sea breezes are light, the lake breezes close, and the two combining together produce a most healthy condition of climate.

The houses of the society thus collected are exceedingly simple, providing protection against two of the most pressing dangers, the fiery heat of the sun and the icy cold of the air. They are neither near together as in towns, since living at close quarters is troublesome and displeasing to people who are seeking to satisfy their desire for solitude, nor yet at a great distance because of the sense of fellowship which they cherish, and to render help to each other if robbers attack them. In each house there is a consecrated room which is called a sanctuary or closet and closeted in this they are initiated into the mysteries of the sanctified life. They take nothing into it, either drink or food or any other of the things necessary for the needs of the body, but laws and oracles delivered through the mouth of prophets, and psalms and anything else which fosters and perfects knowledge and piety. They keep the memory of God alive and never forget it, so that even in their dreams the picture is nothing else but the loveliness of divine excellences and powers. Indeed many when asleep and dreaming give utterance to the glorious verities of their holy philosophy. Twice every day they pray, at dawn and at eventide; at sunrise they pray for a fine bright day, fine and bright in the true sense of the heavenly daylight which they pray may fill their minds. At sunset they ask that the soul may be wholly relieved from the press of the senses and the objects of sense and sitting where she is consistory and council chamber to herself pursue the quest of

truth. The interval between early morning and evening is spent entirely in spiritual exercise. They read the Holy Scriptures and seek wisdom from their ancestral philosophy by taking it as an allegory, since they think that the words of the literal text are symbols of something whose hidden nature is revealed by studying the underlying meaning.

They have also writings of men of old, the founders of their way of thinking, who left many memorials of the form used in allegorical interpretation and these they take as a kind of archetype and imitate the method in which this principle is carried out. And so they do not confine themselves to contemplation but also compose hymns and psalms to God in all sorts of meters and melodies which they write down with the rhythms necessarily made more solemn.

For six days they seek wisdom by themselves in solitude in the closets mentioned above, never passing the outside door of the house or even getting a distant view of it. But every seventh day they meet together as for a general assembly and sit in order according to their age in the proper attitude, with their hands inside the robe, the right hand between the breast and the chin and the left withdrawn along the flank. Then the senior among them who also has the fullest knowledge of the doctrines which they profess comes forward and with visage and voice alike quiet and composed gives a well-reasoned and wise discourse. He does not make an exhibition of clever rhetoric like the orators or sophists of today but follows careful examination by careful expression of the exact meaning of the thoughts, and this does not lodge just outside of the ears of the audience but passes through the hearing into the soul and there stays securely. All the others sit still and listen, showing their approval merely by their looks or nods.

This common sanctuary in which they meet every seventh day is a double enclosure, one portion set apart for the use of the men, the other for the women. For women, too, regularly make part of the audience with the same ardour and the same sense of their calling. The wall between the two chambers rises up from the ground to three or four cubits built in the form of a breast-work, while the space above up to the roof is left open. This arrangement serves two purposes; the modesty becoming to the female

sex is preserved, while the women, sitting within ear-shot, can easily follow what is said since there is nothing to obstruct the voice of the speaker.

THEY lay self-control to be as it were the foundation of their soul and on it build the other virtues. None of them would put food or drink to his lips before sunset since they hold that philosophy finds its right place in the light, the needs of the body in the darkness, and therefore they assign the day to the one and some small part of the night to the other. Some in whom the desire for studying wisdom is more deeply implanted even only after three days remember to take food. Others so luxuriate and delight in the banquet of truths which wisdom richly and lavishly supplies that they hold out for twice that time and only after six days do they bring themselves to taste such sustenance as is absolutely necessary. They have become habituated to abstinence like the grasshoppers who are said to live on air because, I suppose, their singing makes their lack of food a light matter. But to the seventh day, as they consider it to be sacred and festal in the highest degree, they have awarded special privileges as its due, and on it after providing for the soul refresh the body also, which they do as a matter of course with the cattle, too, by releasing them from their continuous labour. Still they eat nothing costly, only common bread with salt for a relish, flavoured further by the daintier with hyssop, and their drink is spring water. . . .

As for the two forms of shelter, clothes and housing, we have already said that the house is unembellished and a makeshift constructed for utility only. Their clothing likewise is the most inexpensive, enough to protect them against extreme cold and heat, a thick coat of shaggy skin in winter and in summer a vest or linen shirt. . . .

I WISH also to speak of their common assemblages and the cheerfulness of their convivial meals as contrasted with those of other people. Some people when they have filled themselves with strong drink behave as though they had drunk not wine but some witch's potion charged with frenzy and madness and anything more fatal that can be imagined to overthrow their reason. They bellow and rave like wild dogs, attack and

bite each other and gnaw off noses, ears, fingers and some other parts of the body, so that they make good the story of the comrades of Odysseus and the Cyclops by eating "gobbets" of men, as the poet says, and with greater cruelty than the Cyclops. For he avenged himself on men whom he suspected to be enemies, they on their familiars and friends and sometimes even on their kin over the salt and across the board, and as they pour the libation of peace they commit deeds of war like those of the gymnastic contests, counterfeiting the genuine coin of manly exercise, no wrestlers but wretches, for that is the right name to give them. For what the athletes do in the arena while sober, in the daylight, with the eyes of all Greece upon them in the hope of victory and the crown and in the exercise of their skill, is debased by the revellers who ply their activities in convivial gatherings by night and in darkness, drink-besotted, ignorant, and skilful only for mischief to inflict dishonour, insult and grievous outrage on the objects of their assault. And if no one plays the umpire and comes forward to intervene and separate them, they carry on the bout with increased licence to the finish, ready both to kill and to be killed. For they suffer no less than what they mete to others though they know it not, so infatuated are these who shrink not from drinking wine, as the comic poet says, to mar not only their neighbours but themselves.

And so those who but now came to the party sound in body and friendly at heart leave soon afterwards in enmity and with bodily mutilation—enmity in some cases calling for advocates and judges, mutilation in others requiring the apothecary and physician and the help that they can bring. Others belonging to what we may suppose is the more moderate part of the company are in a state of overflow. Draughts of strong wine act upon them like mandragora, they throw the left elbow forward, turn the neck at a right angle, belch into the cups and sink into a profound sleep, seeing nothing and hearing nothing, having apparently only one sense and that the most slavish, taste. I know of some who when they are half-seas-over and before they have completely gone under arrange donations and subscriptions in preparation for tomorrow's bout, considering that one factor in their present exhilaration is the

hope of future intoxication. In this way they spend their whole life ever heartless and homeless, enemies to their parents, their wives and their children, enemies too to their country and at war with themselves. For a loose and a dissolute life is a menace to all.

SOME perhaps may approve the method of banqueting now prevalent everywhere through hankering for the Italian expensiveness and luxury emulated both by Greeks and non-Greeks who make their arrangements for ostentation rather than festivity. Sets of three or many couches made of tortoise shell or ivory or even more valuable material, most of them inlaid with precious stones; coverlets purple-dyed with gold interwoven, others brocaded with flower patterns of all sorts of colours to allure the eye; a host of drinking cups set out in their several kinds, beakers, stoops, tankards, other goblets of many shapes, very artistically and elaborately chased by scientific craftsmen. For waiting there are slaves of the utmost comeliness and beauty, giving the idea that they have come not so much to render service as to give pleasure to the eyes of the beholders by appearing on the scene. Some of them who are still boys pour the wine, while the water is carried by full-grown lads fresh from the bath and smooth shaven, with their faces smeared with cosmetics and paint under the eyelids and the hair of the head prettily plaited and tightly bound. . . .

Seven tables at the least and even more are brought in covered with the flesh of every creature that land, sea and rivers or air produce, beast, fish or bird, all choice and in fine condition, each table differing in the dishes served and the method of seasoning. And, that nothing to be found in nature should be unrepresented, the last tables brought in are loaded with fruits, not including those reserved for the drinking bouts and the after-dinners as they call them. Then while some tables are taken out emptied by the gluttony of the company who gorge themselves like cormorants, so voraciously that they nibble even at the bones, other tables have their dishes mangled and torn and left half eaten. And when they are quite exhausted, their bellies crammed up to the gullets, but their lust still ravenous, impotent for eating [they turn to the drink]. But why dilate on these doings which are

now condemned by many of the more sober minded as giving further vent to the lusts which might profitably be curtailed? For one may well pray for what men most pray to escape, hunger and thirst, rather than for the lavish profusion of food and drink found in festivities of this kind. . . .

BUT since the story of these well-known banquets is full of such follies and they stand self-convicted in the eyes of any who do not regard conventional opinions and the widely circulated report which declares them to have been all that they should be, I will describe in contrast the festal meetings of those who have dedicated their own lives and themselves to knowledge and the contemplation of the verities of nature, following the truly sacred instructions of the prophet Moses. First of all these people assemble after seven sets of seven days have passed, for they revere not only the simple seven but its square also, since they know its chastity and perpetual virginity. This is the eve of the chief feast which Fifty takes for its own [i.e., the Feast of Pentecost], Fifty the most sacred of numbers and the most deeply rooted in nature, being formed from the square of the right-angled triangle which is the source from which the universe springs.

So then they assemble, white-robed and with faces in which cheerfulness is combined with the utmost seriousness, but before they recline, at a signal from a member of the Rota, which is the name commonly given to those who perform these services, they take their stand in a regular line in an orderly way, their eyes and hands lifted up to Heaven, eyes because they have been trained to fix their gaze on things worthy of contemplation, hands in token that they are clean from gain-taking and not defiled through any cause of the profit-making kind. So standing they pray to God that their feasting may be acceptable and proceed as He would have it.

After the prayers the seniors recline according to the order of their admission, since by senior they do not understand the aged and grey headed, who are regarded as still mere children if they have only in late years come to love this rule of life, but those who from their earliest years have grown to manhood and spent their prime in pursuing the contemplative branch of philosophy, which indeed is the noblest and most god-like part.

The feast is shared by women also, most of them aged virgins, who have kept their chastity not under compulsion, like some of the Greek priestesses, but of their own free will in their ardent yearning for wisdom. Eager to have her for their life mate, they have spurned the pleasures of the body and desire no mortal offspring but those immortal children which only the soul that is dear to God can bring to the birth unaided because the Father has sown in her spiritual rays enabling her to behold the verities of wisdom.

The order of reclining is so apportioned that the men sit by themselves on the right and the women by themselves on the left. Perhaps it may be thought that couches though not costly still of a softer kind would have been provided for people of good birth and high character and trained practice in philosophy. Actually they are plank beds of the common kinds of wood, covered with quite cheap strewings of native papyrus, raised slightly at the arms to give something to lean on. For while they mitigate somewhat the harsh austerity of Sparta, they always and everywhere practise a frugal contentment worthy of the free, and oppose with might and main the love-lures of pleasure. They do not have slaves to wait upon them as they consider that the ownership of servants is entirely against nature. For nature has borne all men to be free, but the wrongful and covetous acts of some who pursued that source of evil, inequality, have imposed their yoke and invested the stronger with power over the weaker. In this sacred banquet there is as I have said no slave, but the services are rendered by free men who perform their tasks as attendants not under compulsion nor yet waiting for orders, but with deliberate goodwill anticipating eagerly and zealously the demands that may be made. For it is not just any free men who are appointed for these offices but young members of the association chosen with all care for their special merit, who as becomes their good character and nobility are pressing on to reach the summit of virtue. They give their services gladly and proudly like sons to their real fathers and mothers, judging them to be the parents of them all in common, in a closer affinity than that of blood, since to the right minded there is no closer tie than noble living. And they come in to do their

office ungirt and with tunics hanging down, that in their appearance there may be no shadow of anything to suggest the slave.

In this banquet—I know that some will laugh at this, but only those whose actions call for tears and lamentation—no wine is brought . . . but only water of the brightest and clearest, cold for most of the guests but warm for such of the older men as live delicately. The table too is kept pure from the flesh of animals; the food laid on it is loaves of bread with salt as a seasoning, sometimes also flavoured with hyssop as a relish for the daintier appetites. Abstinence from wine is enjoined by right reason, as for the priest when sacrificing, so to these for their lifetime. For wine acts like a drug producing folly, and costly dishes stir up that most insatiable of animals, desire.

SUCH are the preliminaries. But when the guests have laid themselves down arranged in rows, as I have described, and the attendants have taken their stand with everything in order ready for their ministry, the President of the company, when a general silence is established—here it may be asked when is there no silence—well at this point there is silence even more than before so that no one ventures to make a sound or breathe with more force than usual—amid this silence, I say, he discusses some question arising in the Holy Scriptures or solves one that has been propounded by someone else. In doing this he has no thought of making a display, for he has no ambition to get a reputation for clever oratory but desires to gain a closer insight into some particular matters and having gained it not to withhold it selfishly from those who if not so clear-sighted as he have at least a similar desire to learn. His instruction proceeds in a leisurely manner; he lingers over it and spins it out with repetitions, thus permanently imprinting the thoughts in the souls of the hearers, since if the speaker goes on descanting with breathless rapidity the mind of the hearers is unable to follow his language, loses ground and fails to arrive at apprehension of what is said. His audience listens with ears pricked up and eyes fixed on him always in exactly the same posture, signifying comprehension and understanding by nods and glances, praise of the speaker by the cheerful change of expression which steals over the face, dif-

A way in self one chose amo The man some ing feet rapt the halt ing o Th its ow the B love, single beside there the so

ficulty by a gentler movement of the head and by pointing with a finger-tip of the right hand. . . .

When then the President thinks he has discoursed enough . . . [he] rises and sings a hymn composed as an address to God. . . . After him all the others take their turn as they are arranged and in the proper order while all the rest listen in complete silence except when they have to chant the closing lines or refrains, for then they all lift up their voices, men and women alike. When everyone has finished his hymn the young men bring in the tables mentioned a little above on which is set the truly purified meal of leavened bread seasoned with salt mixed with hyssop, out of reverence for the holy table enshrined in the sacred vestibule of the temple on which lie loaves and salt without condiments, the loaves unleavened and the salt unmixed. For it was meet that the simplest and purest food should be assigned to the highest caste, namely the priests, as a reward for their ministry, and that the others while aspiring to similar privileges should abstain from seeking the same as they and allow their superiors to retain their precedence.

AFTER the supper they hold the sacred vigil which is conducted in the following way. They rise up all together and standing in the middle of the refectory form themselves first into two choirs, one of men and one of women, the leader and precentor chosen for each being the most honoured amongst them and also the most musical. Then they sing hymns to God composed of many measures and set to many melodies, sometimes chanting together, sometimes taking up the harmony antiphonally, hands and feet keeping time in accompaniment, and rapt with enthusiasm reproduce sometimes the lyrics of the procession, sometimes of the halt and of the wheeling and counter-wheeling of a choric dance.

Then when each choir has separately done its own part in the feast, having drunk as in the Bacchic rites of the strong wine of God's love, they mix and both together become a single choir, a copy of the choir set up of old beside the Red Sea in honour of the wonders there wrought. For at the command of God the sea became a source of salvation to one

party and of perdition to the other. As it broke in twain and withdrew under the violence of the forces which swept it back there rose on either side, opposite to each other, the semblance of solid walls, while the space thus opened between them broadened into a highway smooth and dry throughout on which the people marched under guidance right on until they reached the higher ground on the opposite mainland. But when the sea came rushing in with the returning tide, and from either side passed over the ground where dry land had appeared, the pursuing enemy were submerged and perished. This wonderful sight and experience, an act transcending word and thought and hope, so filled with ecstasy both men and women that forming a single choir they sang hymns of thanksgiving to God their Saviour, the men led by the prophet Moses and the women by the prophetess Miriam.

It is on this model above all that the choir of the Therapeutae of either sex, note in response to note and voice to voice, the treble of the women blending with the bass of the men, create an harmonious concert, musical in the truest sense. Lovely are the thoughts, lovely the words, and worthy of reverence the choristers, and the end and aim of thoughts, words and choristers alike is piety. Thus they continue till dawn, drunk with this drunkenness in which there is no shame; then, not with heavy heads or drowsy eyes but more alert and wakeful than when they came to the banquet, they stand with their faces and whole body turned to the east and when they see the sun rising they stretch their hands up to heaven and pray for bright days and knowledge of the truth and the power of keen-sighted thinking. And after the prayers they depart each to his private sanctuary once more to ply the trade and till the field of their wonted philosophy.

So much then for the Therapeutae, who have taken to their hearts the contemplation of nature and what it has to teach, and have lived in the soul alone, citizens of Heaven and the world, presented to the Father and Maker of all by their faithful sponsor Virtue, who has procured for them God's friendship and added a gift going hand in hand with it, true excellence of life, a boon better than all good fortune and rising to the very summit of felicity.

THE STUDY OF MAN

LIBERATING THE SOCIAL SCIENTIST

A Plea to Unshackle the Study of Man

JOHN DEWEY

IN THE last year or so COMMENTARY has published a number of articles on recent work in the social sciences, under the heading "The Study of Man." Although these articles deal with a variety of topics, I find it significant that they converge toward a common conclusion. This conclusion emerges both from their criticism of the basic defect they discern and in the constructive suggestions they make for improvement. The common element is a troubled awareness of a narrowness, a restraint, a constriction imposed upon the social sciences by their present "frame of reference," i.e. the axioms, terms, and boundaries under which they function today.

Parenthetically, may I remark that while I

IN THE history of Western thought there is scarcely a single development of more significance than the separation of *physical* from *social* inquiry. Here, JOHN DEWEY, America's distinguished philosopher, examines the profound implications of this separation for a liberal-democratic society. As a spokesman for American liberalism, and as educator, philosopher, and political thinker, Professor Dewey—who celebrates his eighty-eighth birthday this month—has long been concerned with this problem. He was graduated from the University of Vermont in 1879 and was professor of philosophy at Columbia University from 1904 until his retirement in 1930. An active participant in a number of liberal organizations and causes, Professor Dewey has been one of the great democratic spokesmen of our time. Some of his books include: *School and Society*, *How We Think*, *Democracy and Education*, *Human Nature and Conduct*, *The Quest for Certainty*, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, *Culture and Freedom*, and *The Problems of Men*.

shall use the phrase "social inquiry," I would prefer the phrase "study of man" (and/or "inquiry into human relationships," or into the "cultures of associated life"). These are better names; they do not prejudice the subject matter of study as does the name "social" in its present usage, with its weighty suggestion of something set over against "individual."

In his "Government by Manipulation" (COMMENTARY, July 1946), Nathan Glazer raised the question whether it was appropriate for social study to intervene in the conduct of affairs merely as a "trouble-shooter" to reduce friction between groups (racial friction between Japanese and "whites" on the West Coast during the War, in the material dealt with), rather than with the broader objective of promoting "formulation and implementation of long-range goals." Mr. Glazer's title, "Government by Manipulation," indicates the criticism of the standpoint and method of most of the studies upon which he reports. His reference to "long-range goals" indicates the nature of his suggestion of a better and more effective "frame of reference."

Daniel Bell's article "Adjusting Men to Machines" (COMMENTARY, January 1946) contains a detailed account of studies of human relationships in a different field, that of industry as seen in "the sociology of the factory." It opens on a note similar to that of Mr. Glazer. "The resources of the social sciences are called upon more and more frequently to deal with the everyday problems of our society, particularly those arising from conflict and friction between groups"—in this case, that between workers on one side and employers and supervisors on the other side. The net outcome of his careful examination of a large number of such investigations is that those who have con-

ducted the inquiries "operate as technicians, approaching the problem as it is given to them and keeping within the framework set by those who hire them" (*italics mine*). Here criticism of current procedures as being restricted within a framework that is fixed prior to and outside of inquiry is clear. The nature of the suggestion as to the need of a wider and freer framework is found in such statements as: "There are under way few studies to see what kind of jobs can best stimulate the spontaneity and freedom of the worker and how we can best alter our industrial methods to assure such jobs."

A second article by Mr. Glazer, "What is Sociology's Job?" (COMMENTARY, January 1947), is also a survey of a specific field. It examines the papers read at the last annual meeting of the American Sociological Society, with the object of finding out the prevailing trends of sociological inquiry. The conclusion offered is that there is paucity of interest in the assumptions and hypotheses that are the "underpinning" of the inquiries carried on, while "practical" topics are the main subjects of research, "practical" meaning "crime, juvenile delinquency, divorce, race relations, absenteeism and restriction of output in industry." Although the inquiry in this case is not restricted by conflicting interests between groups, here too there is nonetheless the definite conclusion that it is limited by extraneous considerations with the result that it is largely given over to "proving" the already obvious.

Finally, there is the highly suggestive article by Karl Polanyi, quite explicit in both criticism and constructive suggestion (COMMENTARY, February 1947). Its main title, significantly, is "Our Obsolete Market Mentality," and its subtitle, also significantly, is "Civilization Must Find a New Thought Pattern."

THUS, all of these articles agree in finding the "framework of reference" of the current study of human affairs so restricted as to narrow its potential usefulness to human concerns. All of them, also, indicate the need and the desirability of a wider and freer range in inquiry. The following passage in Mr. Bell's article is reasonably representative of their tenor: "Being scientists, they (that is, those who have conducted the inquiries in question) are concerned with 'what is' and are not inclined to involve themselves in questions of moral values or larger social issues." In quoting this passage, I welcome the quotation

marks around "what is." For it is the supreme business of scientific inquiry to ask about and find out about *what is*. In what follows I shall accordingly show that the trouble with the inquiries in question is that they fail to be genuinely scientific precisely because, instead of taking *what is*, the facts of the case in human relationships as the subjects of their investigations, they start with a prejudgment as to what is: one that automatically limits the inquiries carried on. And I shall show that when this *unscientific* limitation is removed, "larger social issues" (and moral values as involved in these issues) are necessarily and inevitably an integral part of the subject matter of inquiry.

That shrewd industrialists engage trained experts to study and report upon the conditions that create friction and lower efficiency and profits, proves only that they are shrewd in conducting their business. That the experts who are engaged employ techniques that have proved efficacious in inquiries that are conducted scientifically without predetermined limitations (particularly those of a monetary kind), is also easily understandable. But that inquiries are scientific which are carried on under conditions of an outlook, standpoint, and aim extraneous to scientific inquiry, is, to state the matter baldly, a delusion. And in the case of "social" inquiry it is a dangerous delusion.

For instead of resulting in liberation from conditions previously fixed (which is the fruit of genuine scientific inquiry) it tends to give scientific warrant, barring minor changes, to the *status quo*—or the established order—a matter especially injurious in the case of economic inquiry. Accordingly, in the governmental and industrial studies reported upon by Glazer and Bell, it is not possible to justify their claim to be "scientific" save on the pertinent ground that they borrow and use some techniques that have proved effective in inquiries carried on free of predetermination in outlook, selection of problems, and methods of procedure.

In genuine scientific inquiry, as may be noted by observation of the more advanced forms, the frame of reference is a *working* matter. It is a product of previous knowings as well as a directive of further inquiries. But in the "social" studies reported upon, the reverse is the case. The frame within which the studies proceed is taken as fixed prior to and outside of inquiry. That fact is exemplified in

the seemingly innocent, but actually harmful, use of the adjective "existing" when prefixed to the words "social and/or economic order." The word "existing" is used in a way which excludes from critical examination the very order that is the nominal subject of investigation; for it confines the subject matter investigated within an arbitrarily narrowed local segment and short-time span of "existence."

The case of the *existing* economic order is peculiarly instructive. Were it stated that the subject of study is the *present* industrial, commercial, and financial order, as that is determined by considerations that are largely those of pecuniary success, the scientific limitation would at least be brought out into the open. But the use of "existing," in the cases reported, is conditioned and confined by two assumptions. It is assumed in the first place that "economic" subject matter is so complete on its own account and of itself, inherently, and, as used to be said, "essentially," that it can be scientifically studied in independence of all other social (human) facts. In the second place, it is assumed that what has "existed"—between whatever date is set between the beginning of the present state of industry, business, and finance and the year 1947 as limits—can be treated as a scientific sample or representative of the economic order without any reference to its antecedents or its consequences.

The two things mentioned are, however, two faces of one and the same fact. It is only by treating the economic order as complete in isolation, in itself, that a limited local and temporal segment can be treated as complete, as fixed and final, for scientific purposes, in its arbitrarily cut-off "existence," and vice versa.*

SUMMING up what has been said, its import is that much "study of man," as that taking place in sociological science, proceeds upon a fallacious assumption. This assumption is that a study can be scientific apart from a temporal and spatial extension which places given local segments and temporal sectors within that larger stretch of events which includes conditioning antecedents and the consequences which are the inevitable outcome of what is locally and immediately at hand. Were inquiry car-

ried on by the "intellect" in terms of pure logic, the monstrosity of this assumption would be apparent. But even when "pure" is taken in the sense of full and *intrinsic* exemption from the influence exerted by institutional traditions, occupations, and interests, there is no such thing as pure economics. Such "purity" as is found in the more advanced aspects of scientific inquiry constitutes an historic achievement by which such inquiry has itself become enough of an institutional tradition and interest on its own account to dictate, to a considerable extent (probably never completely, even in mathematics), the conditions under which it is practiced.* Physical inquiry, and to considerable but lesser extent, physiological inquiry are examples of fields that have largely achieved this emancipation and consequent "purity." In this respect they hold up a model to be striven for in the backward "social" subjects that are still so largely held in subordination to institutional and other aims and conditions that are alien to the business of inquiry.

In this connection it is worthwhile and, in view of current prejudices, probably necessary to say something about the relation of inquiry to practice and "practical" consequences. In spite of the fact that physical inquiry has, through the medium of technological applications, transformed to an almost revolutionary extent the everyday practices of the larger portion of mankind, the idea still prevails that there is some sort of gulf fixed between science (dignified with the name of "theory" in its classic quasi-godlike sense) and practice. But in the case of the study of man, of "social" studies, it should be obvious that the subject matter studied consists of human practices or activities; that the study of them is itself one variety of human activity or practice, and that its conclusions always intervene in the pre-existing body of human practices in one direction or another. Physical inquiry has now itself attained the status of an institution, and, using the word descriptively, without disparaging

* By one of those curious distortions so over-frequent in philosophical discussions, my use of the word "instrumental" in previous writings has been often represented and criticized as if it signified that "knowing" must be limited to some *predetermined specific* end. What I have said, time and again, is precisely to the opposite effect. It is that *scientific* knowing is the only *general* way in our possession of getting free from customary ends and of opening up vistas of new and freer ends.

* Something is said later about the scientific legitimacy of partial or specialized inquiries *provided* they are undertaken in such a way that they can be restored, as need arises, to the total complex of subject matter within which they fall.

connotation, of a vested institutional interest, while the present state of sociological inquiry as reported, shows that it still proceeds in subordination to alien institutional interests, instead of being conducted as an institutional interest in its own behalf.

II

ANOTHER statement in the first of Mr. Glazer's two articles. He pointed out that the revolution in the method and results of physical inquiry (beginning, be it recalled, only a short three or four centuries ago) has had momentous human consequences:—nothing less, in fact, than the transformation of the feudal social order into the bourgeois social order. He suggests that development of social inquiry may be followed by an equally extensive transformation of the now and here "existing" order. The remark is pertinent to what has been said about the arbitrary cutting off of the present from its human past and its equally inevitable human future.

But it is equally pertinent in its direct bearing upon the origin or source of the present solid wall that divides physical from human inquiry: a wall that also separates the different aspects of human inquiry from one another, and thereby cuts economics, politics, and morals out from the single and inclusive cultural whole in which their subject matters are indissolubly bound together. The effect on science of the divisions thus instituted is effectively to prevent cross-fertilization of methods and results, so that physical inquiry has a one-sided restricted human application, while human inquiry is kept shut up in the region of opinion, class struggle, and dogmatic "authority."

The story of physical inquiry up to the present time presents two outstanding features. One of them is familiar; it achieved its present measure of emancipation from alien traditional and institutional interests only by means of a severe struggle between church and science, so severe that it commonly bears the name of "warfare." The other feature, though outstanding in its human consequences, is commonly ignored. The victory won was not clear-cut and complete. It was a compromise. In this compromise, the world, including man, even beginning with man, was cut into two separate parts. One of them was awarded to natural inquiry under the name of physical science. The other was kept in possession in fee simple by the "higher" and finally "authori-

tative" domain—and dominion—of the "moral" and "spiritual." In this compromise, each part was free to go its own way provided it refrained from trespassing upon and interfering with the territory made over to the opposed division.

THE course of philosophy from the 16th and 17th centuries can be understood only in terms of efforts to deal with the many "dualisms" mirroring the cleavages this established. But even this is not so important as is the fact that the "victory" won by physical inquiry was one of expediency rather than of principle. The liberation achieved was due in the main to the obvious increase of ease, comfort, and power that followed in the wake of the new science rather than to any grasp of its profound and systematic moral and intellectual import. It is not then a matter of surprise that of late the official representatives of the "spiritual" domain—claiming dominion—have assumed the aggressive. Today they are blaming the serious troubles of the world on physical science, proclaiming that the sole way to salvation is a return to the age when "natural" knowledge was held in strict subjection to the authority (and power) of "spiritual" institutions. Under one condition, this change from suppressed to open conflict is to be welcomed. It is all to the good to have the conflict occur in the light of intelligence rather than in the heat of accusation and counter-accusation.

For once a conflict is adequately brought within the field of intelligent scrutiny, it presents itself as a *problem*: and where there is a problem there are alternative possibilities to be systematically viewed, no longer a mere clash of blind forces. The alternative to subordination of natural inquiry to supernatural authority (more correctly, human authority based on extra-natural grounds) is the development of natural inquiry itself to a point where it is capable of dealing with the troubled difficulties of our social-moral order.*

The actual issue is whether inquiry into social-moral issues can be effectively promoted in any other way than by using the methods that have won notable triumphs in the physical field, together with use of the specific conclusions that have been thereby attained. Utiliza-

* The idea that the alternative is reduction of the human order to the terms of the physical order is no alternative at all. It is only a repetition of that assumption of two separate "dominions" which underlies our present confusion.

tion for the new purpose involves of necessity whatever developments are required in former procedures to render them fruitfully applicable to the new purpose they serve. We need "one world" of intelligence and understanding if we are to obtain one world in other forms of human activity.

IT is in this connection that the alternative of subjection of natural inquiry to external "authority" becomes ominously significant. It means either the establishment of a particular institution having the physical power to enforce its alleged "spiritual" authority, or it means dumping our actual human problems into the lap of the least developed, the most immature, of all of our modes of knowing: politics and ethics. If we take the former path, we find that its influence, in the form in which it flourishes in academic circles in democratic cultures, is slight, while in the form in which it is potent in actual affairs, it is not a "science" but an ideological reflection and "rationalization" of contentious and contending practical policies.

In this contention, the democratic policy has, from the standpoint of inquiry, at least the advantage that it tolerates and, within limits, encourages free inquiry into specific problems as against suppression of discussion in the totalitarian type. But if we confine ourselves to the side of systematic intellectual formulation, we find that the quasi-official doctrine, *traditional* "liberalism," is based upon acceptance of an economic "individualism" which was humanly significant in the earlier stage of the industrial revolution but that is now non-existent save as a defense of one set of economic institutions. On the totalitarian side, the setting of standards and ends is so predetermined that it is socially treasonable and dangerous to subject them to inquiry.

If we turn to ethics or morals as an intellectual discipline, we find ourselves faced with a sorry spectacle. There is no general consensus as to standards of judgment or ends of action. There is also a minimum of agreement as to the methods and "organs" by which standards and aims should be determined. Indeed, for at least the last two hundred years there has been steady deterioration in ethical theory as to these issues. One of the most serious aspects of this situation is that the subject matter of moral inquiry has been increasingly pushed out of the range of the concrete problems of eco-

nomic and political inquiry. In consequence, there has taken place a reduction by which, in popular attitudes, discussion is "moral" in the degree in which it consists of complaints about what exists and exhortations about what *should*, or "ought" to, exist. In fact, the state of moral inquiry at present is a striking exhibition of the division of social inquiry into a number of independent, water-tight, non-communicating compartments, which embody the net outcome of the cleavages that have their source mainly in the isolation of the physical from the distinctively human.

III

I KNOW of no more effective way of calling attention to the *source* and *nature* of the cleavages that now exist between the "material" on one side and the spiritual and moral on the other, than to quote from a semi-official document and avowed proclamation of the cleavage. The passage in question is the opening sentence of the extensive article on "Economics" in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (Vol. 5, p. 344). It reads:

"Economics deals with the social phenomena centering about provision for the material needs of individuals and groups." Even if the word "material" had been italicized, I doubt if many readers would have been given pause, in spite of its use as the differentiating criterion of one class of "social phenomena" from other classes, presumably those of a moral and "spiritual" kind. For this division of the facts of human relations into two separate kinds, one low (low in the sense of base and also in that of basic), the other high, authoritative, and moral, is so deeply entrenched in institutional practices and in traditions established through long centuries that its explicit use as the standard frame of reference for inquiry into "social" facts occasions no protest. It is so familiarly inbred in our intellectual standpoints as to be "natural."

It goes along with a number of other familiar cleavages: body and soul, flesh and spirit, appetite which is animal and conscience which is superimposed as a warning and restraining factor, sense and reason, and, on a more intellectually refined level, the internal and the external, the subjective and the objective. These are cleavages distilled and precipitated in the distinction between the natural and the supernatural which has long held a central and dominating position in the moral history of the

Western world.* I doubt whether a more momentous *moral* fact can be found in all human history than just this separation of the moral from other human interests and attitudes, especially from the "economic."

I referred earlier, in another connection, to the assumption that economic phenomena form such an independent and self-enclosed compartment of social facts that they can be scientifically treated in complete isolation from their human antecedents and consequences. In view of the determining role exerted by industrial, commercial, and financial factors in all phases—scientific, artistic, political, domestic, and international—of the present world, the practically universal passive acceptance of this position would be *unaccountable* did we not understand its source in the historic institutional background of our culture. There is no need to argue in favor of the thesis that economic facts are so far from being an isolated self-enclosed field that, on one side, they are the offspring of the new physical science, and that, on the other side, they affect, through their consequence, the human values of the whole world with ever-increasing intensity. It is enough to face facts with eyes open.†

IT WOULD require volumes to present anything like a full exposition of the cultural background of the identification of "economic" with "material" which has so disastrously cut the economic off from wider and larger human values—those called moral. Two periods of human history, however, are so representative as to have typical significance. One of them dates from ancient Greece, whose economy was a slave economy, and where artisans and laborers, even those not technically slaves, were

completely excluded from community membership—which in Athens meant not only political citizenship but participation in all the things that are worthwhile in art, knowledge, and human companionship.

These facts were acutely noted and comprehensively formulated by Aristotle. On their basis as they then and there "existed," he made a sharp separation between some forms of activity as means and means *only*, and other modes of activity that were, by their inherent nature, or essence, ends-in-themselves.* Economic activity fell completely into the former division. And this is only the beginning of the story. The science and cosmology of the time, as they also received acute and comprehensive formulation by Aristotle, treated the universe as a hierarchical scheme whose parts were graded on the basis of the place held by what was called "matter," with pure matter at the base (in every sense of the word "base") and with the divine, wholly free from any contact with matter, at the apex. Moreover, on the one side change and mutability were strictly conjoined with "matter," and fixity and immutability with self-sustained Being, on the other side. This view persisted in control of what was accepted as natural science until the scientific revolution gave despised motion a central place and "matter" gained "energy," losing that complete passivity which made it the victim of every external "force."

In consequence, the class that was occupied with production, whether in the field or in the shop, was "by nature"—i.e., universally, eternally, and of necessity—menial, servile, embodying only the animal and fleshly part of man, and cut off from all knowledge that was not concerned with the material and mutable. Since Aristotle lived a long time ago, and since at best his metaphysical cosmology appealed to but a small intellectual elite, these doctrines might have faded into insignificance were it not for another imposing historical event. This latter event, which involved the adoption of the substance of the doctrines of Aristotle into the reigning religion, left a mark on the culture of the world which, in spite of other immense changes, is as yet almost indelible.

This other event was the spread of Christian

* The present revival of the notion of the inherent sinfulness of man as explanation of the troubled state of the world (an explanation which strangely enough is a source of comfort to many persons) is contemporary evidence of how deeply these cleavages are entrenched in our culture. See the article of Dr. Sidney Hook on "Intelligence and Evil in Human History" (COMMENTARY, March 1947) for a searching examination of this current revival.

† Critics of the "materialistic" interpretation of history which is attributed to Marx do not seem to notice that this "materialism" was simply an acceptance of the orthodox view of economics, combined with acute observation of its human consequences. To be effective, the criticisms have to be directed at the basic assumption of the isolation and independence of the "economic."

* Unfortunately, the example of Aristotle in taking a local segment and sector of life activities as universal and necessary, because "natural," has been widely adopted in philosophical discourse—even by those who revolt at this special instance.

faith throughout Europe. The supremacy of the Church in the Middle Ages extended far beyond what today is usually called "religion." It was supreme and authoritative in political, economic, artistic, and educational matters. It officially accepted the cosmology and science of Aristotle as the framework of its own intellectual structure in everything "natural" and in everything amenable to human reason. What might otherwise have been a transitory incident was thereby so firmly embedded in the religious culture of the Western world that even the progressive secularization of both knowledge and the dominant everyday interests of the mass of mankind did not seriously shake its hold with respect to the fixed separation of the material from the spiritual and ideal. The severance of the economic from the moral, making each for the purposes of inquiry an independent self-enclosed field, must be understood as one chapter in this story.

IV

THE backwardness of inquiry into human affairs, that is, of the "social" subjects, is an integral part of the record. Social inquiry still clings obstinately to the kind of frame of reference that once controlled physical inquiry, but which was abandoned when systematic scientific advance began. Since the 16th century physical inquiry has shown an ever-growing respect for change; for the *process* of change, to indulge in a pleonasm. Until recently, this respect was limited by the Newtonian framework according to which change took place in changeless space and time, which accordingly were independent of each other. Now physical inquiry has liberated itself (through what, not very happily from the standpoint of popular understanding, is called "relativity") from this limitation.

But the more physical inquiry has developed and fructified through acknowledgment of change and process, the more obstinately orthodox moral inquiry has clung to fixed "first" principles and immutable final or last "ends." The very principle which has transformed physical inquiry from a stagnant condition to one of steady advance is rejected by professed representatives of moral inquiry as the sure road to disorder and chaos. In consequence, the progressive practical application of the method and conclusions of physical inquiry to human affairs has been so unbalanced

as to sustain and widen the very splits and cleavages that now disturb our life. They reinforce the use of pre-scientific, pre-technological morals to support, in the name of what is spiritual, the very conditions which are the source of so much of our moral confusion.

There is another difference in the frame of reference in the two cases that is allied to that just mentioned. The "natural" world, the cosmos with which physical scientific inquiry is operationally concerned, reveals its meanings in the course of that inquiry. It is not something fixed and permanently behind and beneath that progressive inquiry, even though it be baptized by such eulogistic terms as Universe, Reality, etc., and the course taken by inquiry is not determined by some fixed predetermined standard, whatever high metaphysical names be given it. Inquiry is determined by the conclusions reached in the previous course of its own developing methods of observation and test. The unanswered questions, the problems, which have emerged in this course provide its next, immediate directives. The strong points in conclusions already attained provide the resources with which to attack the weaknesses, the deficiencies, and conflicts that form weak points in its present state.

In consequence, inquiry in its most developed and accomplished form has no traffic with absolute generalizations. Its best theories are working hypotheses to be tested through their use in application in new fields. The devotion of official moral inquiry to absolutes, instead of being evidence and source of strength, is evidence and source of its comparatively stagnant estate. It contributes only to maintain that estate. Its absolutes are formal and empty. Everybody gives allegiance to them even where in concrete situations their interests and practice are worlds away. These formal absolutes are largely accountable for the sharp division now existing between economic and moral standpoints.* Inquiry—because of its practical disesteem of fixed generalizations (even though they be called "laws")—in its most developed form can engage freely in a high degree of

* Since the word "moral" is used freely in the above, it may fend off misunderstanding if I say explicitly that, as the word is used, it stands for the human or "social" in its most inclusive reach, not for any special region or segment. I venture to add that the word "law" commonly added to the word moral supplies striking illustration of the rigidities due to this frame.

specification, of "specialization," with the assurance that its results, instead of having an unfavorable impact upon the total body or system of what is known, will serve to solidify and extend the latter. While detailed specialization is carried far beyond anything found in "social" inquiry, it is exempt from the fixed non-communicating divisions which are such a prominent feature of the latter.*

WE ARE faced, as a net outcome, with the necessity of abandoning that alternative which proposes, in effect if not in so many words, to subordinate scientific inquiry to predetermined ends. Instead of that we should adopt, positively and constructively, the exactly opposite alternative. If we break down the underlying attitudes, interests, and convictions which maintain the walls of division that now effectively prevent cross-fertilization and use of the resources at our command, we shall live in a freer and larger world. If and when we surrender the intellectual habits that have come to us as a heritage from the past and use freely the resources that are within our command (because of the development of the frames of reference and the conclusions in physical and physiological matters), we shall find their use does not imprison human inquiry within a fixed physical and "material" framework, but releases and expands methods and conclusions, so that they will lift the heavy weight that now depresses and confines "social" (including moral) subjects.

As the resources that are available are released and expanded, their application in the intelligent clarification of the existing actual and "practical" confusion will follow surely if slowly. The dream of a well-ordered transformation of human affairs as extensive as that which followed change in physical inquiry,

but tempered and balanced as that was not, will cease to be a dream.

But we must first get rid of those assumptions, rooted in institutional conditions, from which physical inquiry at its best has freed itself. To do this we need a clarified view of what physical inquiry is—that is, of what it *does* and how it does it. The misrepresentation that is still current is well illustrated in the following quotation from a recent publication. The text reads as follows:

"All of the sciences have contributed to the belief that man is the victim of a mechanist world and is anything but the captain of his soul. Physics and chemistry have described the universe as a machine operating by immutable laws of cause and effect. Man is but a cog in this machine. Astronomy has revealed an infinite universe of wheels within wheels held together by the force of gravity. In this great system man is an infinitesimal dot of little consequence, etc., etc." If "science" had *revealed* these things as facts, it is difficult to see why there should be so much emotional heat displayed because they have been found out. But as a matter of fact the passage quoted doesn't attain the level of even the "popular" science of fifty years ago.

The type of sweeping generalization here attributed to physics and astronomy is so unscientific that it now flourishes mainly in what is labeled, unfortunately, *moral* theory. Instead of enslaving man to a fixed and finished structure, the progress of science has been accompanied at every step by an expansion of man's practical freedom, enabling him to use natural energies as agencies, first liberating his aims and then providing him with means for realizing them. It is true that this emancipation is still one-sided. But it is this very unbalanced condition that should give us the strongest possible stimulus for extending the scientific standpoint and procedure to fields which still remain under the control of opinion, prejudice, and physical force, and which are still potent only because pre-scientific attitudes and interests have endowed them with institutional authority in the name of morals and religion.

* This is not to impeach the many valid and valuable inquiries carried on by working economists. The criticism is directed against the assumptions regarding the frame of reference that is the theoretical underpinning, which now stand in the way, practically, of a broader human use of their conclusions in guidance of human affairs.

LETTERS FROM READERS

The Gallant Dutch

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. David Bernstein's article in your August issue ["Europe's Jews: Summer, 1947"] does less than justice to the magnificent role played by the Dutch underground movement. A great part of the Jewish survivors owe their lives to Dutch resistance fighters, who provided them with hiding places and false cards and ration books. Thousands of Dutch Christians risked freedom and life for their Jewish compatriots, often for persons with whom they had not been acquainted before. A considerable number of Dutchmen—like the poet Jan Campert—died in concentration camps for having given aid to Jews. The number of traitors and collaborators was small; and it is only fair to mention that even a few Jews cooperated with the Germans and took part in the organization of deportations to Poland. Certainly, there were also "neighbors who stood by wordless when the Gestapo came." Not everybody is a hero, and defenseless civilians could not be expected to fight against the heavily armed SS guards in broad daylight.

It is quite true that the empty houses in the Jewish district of Amsterdam were stripped of wood during the hunger-winter 1944-45. The same thing took place in the Hague in a non-Jewish quarter, which had been evacuated by the Germans. It is senseless to blame these facts on the starving, shivering population; they only wanted a little wood to warm their icy rooms and cook a tiny bit of food. They didn't care whether these empty houses were Jewish or non-Jewish property, they just wanted to survive. . . .

As I owe my life entirely to the Dutch underground movement, I consider it my duty to make these supplements to Mr. Bernstein's article. With deep affection I remember those valiant people who resisted the invader.

WALTER B. MAASS

New York City

We Are Late Starting

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Lewis Corey, in his article "Economic Democracy Without Statism" [in the August

COMMENTARY], has presented the issues that underlie the preservation and the extension of democracy in our time. It would be hard to overemphasize the urgency of the need for coming to grips with the problems that he has mentioned. It is frightening to see how few of this country's top leaders and of our organizations and institutions are involved in working on basic solutions to them.

The longer we wait, the deeper become the social and the economic sores which develop from the stalemate between the desire of the monopolies and the needs of the people, and the harder the cure will be. The English experience illustrates the point. A labor-dominated government, backed by a continuing majority vote of the people, is in power. That government has behind it a quarter of a century of intensive worker education and grass-roots training for political responsibility. Nevertheless, England teeters on the edge of catastrophe, in part because many workers cannot forget the humiliation and neglect that they knew under capitalism. They had been kept too much outside of things that mattered to be able to play the central role that is required of them today.

Monopoly dare not permit the people to get the real training for the part that they must play in democracy. It trains people instead for life under an inhibiting—even if protective—shell. That shell can continue to be capitalism-monopolism or it can become state-monopolism. Unless people are trained for democracy, the monopolism of private capitalism will find its alternative in the monopolies of the state which Corey describes.

It will take a good many years of training for democratic living before monopoly can be replaced by democracy. Besides the years of training, it will take many years of experimentation with the mechanisms of political and economic democracy before we will be ready to replace the institutions of monopoly with institutions which serve democracy. The British Labor party had to revise some of its ideas after coming into power, and the party had years of research and planning behind it. There is very little, perhaps not even the beginning, of this kind of research and planning being done in this country today by those whose commitments are to the democracy that Corey describes.

Neither the required education nor the necessary experimentation seems to be pushing forward. In the case of the labor movement, which is a vital part of the structure of democracy that we are talking about, there is a question at this moment as to the extent of the damage done by the Taft-Hartley Law. It is clear that the damage is great, but not until we have had more time to appraise it will we really know how much this particular law has done to set us back in the race between democracy and monopoly. How much are the liberals of this country ready to do to help overcome the edge that this law has given to those who stand against economic democracy?

The co-ops that Corey mentions are also an important part of the training and institutional structure that must be built. What can be done to bring the co-op movement to maturity in this country, how long will it take, and how many of us are working at it today?

TVA is important to the structure of democracy for the same reasons, but how much longer will TVA be a valid illustration of what we mean unless we get some more TVA's established pretty soon? And what are the chances of that happening?

And so for each of the things to which Corey points as democratic alternatives to statism: as we delay putting into them the intensive, serious, detailed work that they require, we postpone still further the beginning of the period—of how many years? twenty-five? fifty?—that it will take to work out the solutions to the problems of replacing monopoly with democracy. And that delay is an advantage that we can ill afford to give our enemies.

SAMUEL JACOBS

Textile Workers Union of America
New York City

A Special Field for "Commentary"?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have read COMMENTARY with some regularity of late, and let me say that it seems to show steady improvement. In the August issue I liked the article by Lewis Corey, with whose views I am well acquainted. Grattan was good and Martin on Ehrenburg (I think I shall refer to the latter in something I am just now writing). But the most stimulating piece for me was Elliot E. Cohen's "Letter to the Movie Makers." This kind of examination of art, fiction, and propaganda in American efforts to control or destroy racism is a very important contribution; perhaps as a type it should be the hallmark of the magazine. Of course, such articles need to be done thoughtfully, as indeed Mr. Cohen's was. Current mores and culture

are matters which Americans are prone to treat too casually even when their heart is in the right place.

I must register at least one nay. I happen to be well acquainted with the opinions of Carl Dreher, who contributed the article on "Racism and America's World Position." He is brilliant and, I must say, sometimes a persuasive (though more often exasperating) writer. I didn't see the point of this piece. For example, if he's going to use the Soviet Union as a model or a standard to shoot toward, he ought at least to take notice of what meaning pan-Slavism may have for the ideas he here expresses. (If it doesn't mean anything let him say that and try to get away with it; but not to say anything in such a piece is to trade on the ignorance of the reader or on the probability that he can't read current Russian journalism.) Dreher, I must say, though some of his opinions of American life are engaging, seldom misses a chance to redress the balance against America.

But the issue as a whole is stimulating. And as a parting shot, let me compliment you on the excellence of your book reviews.

PAUL BIXLER

Chairman, Editorial Board
The Antioch Review
Yellow Springs, Ohio

Metaphysics of the Movies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Although I welcome David T. Bazelon's review of my book, *Magic and Myth of the Movies*, in the August COMMENTARY, both for its seriousness and the praise it contained, I feel that I should take up so important an issue as that raised by his emphatically unfavorable observations.

A reviewer so well aware of those limitations of Hollywood explored and reprojected by this book and its predecessor should also be aware that it is imprecise and inadequate to assume that I "accept the purposeless dream and invite a cloud of meaninglessness to settle over actuality." First, Mr. Bazelon's position that "actuality" cannot be conceived apart from "purpose" raises the teleological problem and puts us in the midst of philosophy. If pursued to its uttermost, this critical position would insist that any work of analytic criticism, to justify an attribute of purpose, must be equipped with a full-grown ethics—if not with a complete philosophy.

In his far-sighted estimate of my book, Mr. Bazelon slips up by overlooking that a naive application of Freudianism, which he attributes to me, would not account for my viewpoint any more than if (as I have not) I had taken a

straight sociological or aesthetic viewpoint. To label my method "psychoanalytic-surrealist," while it may explain (to quote him directly) the "huge dividends" of "poetry and inspiration" in my previous book, does not per se explain the *relevance* of such dividends to my project as a whole: the understanding of Hollywood as a myth factory. As the great American myth factory, Hollywood is an objective phenomenon and cannot as such be conceived apart from its function (i.e., "purpose"), which is to create mass-metaphysics of an automatist variety. Is such a metaphysics not a dominating "purpose"? How else should Hollywood's purpose be expressed than by an accurate portrait of its phenomenology?

It is not a question of seriously evaluating Hollywood's purpose as "good" or "bad." No literate being may take such an ethics of purpose seriously except to implicitly assume its vitiated primitiveness and to oppose it—politically. After all, Mr. Bazelon would not claim that Hollywood constitutes an ontology; hence it would be absurd to equate it with "actuality" rather than with its own dream-metaphysics. Here I may invoke the assistance of Paul Goodman who, reviewing my book in the *New Leader*, wrote: "Tyler is peculiarly and surprisingly free from the absurdity of making serious sociological analysis and critiques of such material, in the manner of Macdonald's 'Popular Culture' essays or Farrell's application of Marxism or my own socio-psychoanalytic lucubrations." If, with his evocation of "actuality," Mr. Bazelon is calling for such analysis, I may suitably take sides on this point with Mr. Goodman.

Moreover, in terming my analysis of *The Grapes of Wrath* "shockingly bad" and in asserting that I am "off the mark to a fantastic degree" when I use "the motive" of "a desire on the part of the underprivileged principals for cleanliness and modern plumbing . . . as a key to the whole movie," and that thus my "cynicism is not even amusing," Mr. Bazelon, I submit, is guilty of a most superficial and careless (if not a "shockingly bad") reading of what I actually wrote about this film. The following passage from my book proves, I think, that I conceive the desires of the underprivileged principals of this movie as existing in a sphere which Mr. Bazelon should not be slow in identifying as that of "actuality":

"... as I have said, *The Grapes of Wrath* . . . makes deliberate feints at taking the economic-political dilemma by its horns. With this in mind we must deny the possible implication that economic unhappiness, of which the Okies are so convincing and eloquent a symbol, can be psychoanalyzed out of existence by devices

of a type like the New Deal reform program of lending a helping hand in major crises. Yes, Tommy Joad goes out to fight the workers' fight, but we have no guarantee that he can understand the true principles in this fight any better than his mother can understand the nature of poetic metaphors. In these very metaphors one gets a whiff of the most unfortunate sort of mass-metaphysics, a metaphysics that can exist so easily on paper—for instance, in our own Constitution or in Lincoln's Gettysburg Address—and with so much difficulty in material fact."

PARKER TYLER

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his first "business" paragraph, Mr. Tyler accuses me of an ambitious relation to "philosophy." I can only bow my head and answer, weakly, "yes." I assumed that he was a critic of the highest order, no matter what order of subject-matter he might be dealing with; that is, that he always wrote in view of an image and understanding of the human being and his values.

It was exactly this that I attempted to criticize, since I believe it to be basic to all critical work, and I wanted to get to the heart of Mr. Tyler's writing. Moreover, it was not I who burdened Mr. Tyler with "philosophy"; after all, he did include in his book a definition of meaning. And, rightly or wrongly, I found this definition profoundly helpful in illuminating his entire method and the huge discrepancy (that I found) between his two books.

Mr. Tyler's next paragraph is not very clear to me. I referred to the "purpose" of human beings and Mr. Tyler's conception of this, not primarily to the purpose of Hollywood. That Hollywood is a myth factory is a very interesting idea. I do not quarrel with such a notion, I simply observe its elaboration. To state my primary criticism in relation to this assertion and its development in Mr. Tyler's book, I would say that he has not satisfied me, as a hopeful reader, in showing the connections of the products of this Hollywood factory to the actual life lived in this country. And he should have done so. In the beautiful concluding chapter to his first book, he did exactly that.

It should be clear now that "Mr. Bazelon would not claim that Hollywood constitutes an ontology" and that I do not "equate" Hollywood with "actuality." I am only saying that it should not be taken so much *in its own terms* as Mr. Tyler takes it. The issue of the criticism of popular culture on which Mr. Tyler "may suitably take sides . . . with Mr. Goodman" against me is too long and complicated to discuss here.

Mr. Tyler has written a "shockingly bad" analysis of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and I have read this in a "shockingly bad" manner—but also Mr. Tyler offers a "shockingly bad" interpretation of my use of "actuality." I did *not* accuse him of never dealing with actuality in his book. I have re-read his analysis of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and perhaps this note will allow him to re-interpret my use of terms; then he has only to rewrite his chapter on the Okie picture and everything will be in order for the appearance of his next book, which, I hope, will employ the movie phenomenon as the bridge that it is to the facts and truths of American industrial existence.

DAVID T. BAZELON

New York City

Franz Kafka

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I should like a word with Friedrich Torberg, whose letter on the subject of Franz Kafka appeared in the August issue of COMMENTARY. Mr. Torberg wastes time and energy defending Kafka's Jewishness. It doesn't really matter whether he was Jewish, or, rather, how Jewish he was. Kafka's stature is not affected by making him "all Jew" or "no Jew." With the "Jewish oversoul" squeezed in or out of him, he remains the same. He should be judged, as any man should, by what he has contributed to the world; let us not bicker over trivialities. Some Czechs will call him a great Czech. Some Jews will consider him a great Jew. An open and honest mind will like to think of him as a great *man*.

B. F. SMITH

Covington, Tennessee

Commentaries

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I consider Maurice Goldbloom's review of James Burnham's book *The Struggle for the World*, in the July COMMENTARY, a very brilliant appraisal. It constitutes an indispensable antidote to some of Burnham's lurid generalizations. Burnham has, unfortunately, lost all sense of the necessity of a constructive and fundamental reorganization of our society and I

think that Goldbloom points this out very well. Permit me also to say that your magazine presents some of the sanest and soundest analyses of American life today and that it should be required reading for all American intellectuals, particularly those who read the *Nation* and the *New Republic*.

ROBERT DELSON

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is truly with pleasure that I suggest the enclosed list of persons as possible subscribers, for I am deeply indebted to you, the editors and publishers of COMMENTARY. I have at last found a periodical which, in the majority of cases, echoes what should be the sentiments of the Jewish people in the American scene. Your articles on the acculturation of the Jewish heritage with our present-day social environment are enlightening, instructive, and most important; they indicate a realization that varied sides exist in any problem, a factor so many of our current magazines of Jewish origin apparently fail to recognize.

H. LACKMAN

Yale University

New Haven, Conn.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just seen the April issue of COMMENTARY, containing Stephen Spender's article on Unesco. I quite agree with Mr. Spender on the four conditions vital to the success of Unesco. But the birth of Unesco, for which the Chinese delegates at Dumbarton Oaks were partly instrumental, seemed to be rather artificial: the egg came into existence before the hen. During the first Unesco conference held in Paris last November, the French Institute of Public Opinion investigated the degree of popular acquaintance with Unesco. It was discovered that 85 per cent of the people knew nothing of the organization. The Chinese National Commission for Unesco came into being only last month, and I am afraid even a still smaller fraction of Chinese intelligentsia knew anything about Unesco.

COCHING CHU

National Chekiang University
Hangchow, China

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Nightmare Come True

THE OTHER KINGDOM. By DAVID ROUSSET. New York, Reynal & Hitchcock, 1947. 173 pp. \$2.75.

SMOKE OVER BIRKENAU. By SEWERYNA SZMAGLEWSKA. New York, Henry Holt, 1947. 386 pp. \$3.50.

BEYOND THE LAST PATH. By EUGENE WEINSTOCK. New York, Boni & Gaer, 1947. 281 pp. \$2.75.

Reviewed by IRVING KRISTOL

IN ONE of his dialogues, Oscar Wilde set forth the thesis that literature anticipates life: "Schopenhauer has analyzed the pessimism that characterizes modern thought, but Hamlet invented it. . . . The Nihilist, that strange martyr who has no faith, who goes to the stake without enthusiasm, and dies for what he does not believe in, is a purely literary product. He was invented by Turgeniev, and completed by Dostoevsky. Robespierre came out of the pages of Rousseau. . . . The 19th century as we know it is largely an invention of Balzac."

What Wilde found amusing later generations have come to accept as a somber platitude. Thus David Rousset writes of Buchenwald that "the inmates of the Camp belong to a world by Céline with overtones of Kafka." It is an unreal world, hideous and fantastic—yet a true world, even *the* true world. The boundary between fantasy and reality, erased by 20th century literature, has disappeared from 20th century life.

The following sentiments, quoted by Rousset from one of his fellow inmates, are only too familiar to our ears: "Unless you lived through it yourself, you could never understand. . . . For one thing, they were nowhere as bad as you think—and at the same time they were infinitely worse than anything you could ever imagine. . . . Even I, after more than a year there, cannot talk about it without feeling as if I were making it all up. Either that, or telling a dream that someone else has

dreamed." Who after this would deny that the 20th century is an invention of Kafka?

This "concentratory universe" (Rousset) of our century has its unfathomable gods: the SS—the reflection of their shining boots glazes their figures until they are as monstrous, menacing, and Olympian as close-ups on the movie screen. The rule of these gods is absent-minded, whimsical, terrible beyond words. The mortals in this universe are haunted by a dead life—their life prior to internment. This life continues to lead a disembodied existence, extending itself in the minds of bureaucrats and in metal file-drawers, terminating abruptly, perhaps years afterwards, in a sentence against which there is no appeal. Each man is eternally on trial for an offense he is ignorant of; the evidence accumulates—he never sees it; witnesses testify—he does not hear them; new charges are preferred—he never learns of them; and out of this "desert of ignorance" comes the order for death, prescribing with calculating nicety the kind of death and the length of suffering that shall be inflicted.

This universe has its special brand of "witless irony" that is part of its normal atmosphere. (Max Brod reports that when Kafka read *The Trial* aloud to his friends, they all laughed—and Kafka joined them—at this grotesquely funny story.) The SS provided football fields, swimming pools, band concerts, and brothels for men half-dead and semi-conscious. At Dora, a subsidiary of Buchenwald, the SS presented the prisoners with a Christmas tree, which they were compelled to admire, standing half-naked in the snow and biting cold for hours on end. Suicide was strictly forbidden. The administration was an incredible mixture of Taylor rationalization and thoroughgoing anarchy. And Miss Szmaglewska quietly informs us that because of the forced labor and the struggle to keep alive, few prisoners at the Birkenau extermination camp succumbed to mental disorders.

It is a universe of metamorphosis. Writes Mr. Weinstock: "When the dogs finished their

midday meal of one kilo of beef each, the prisoners often fought among themselves savagely, struggling for a bone on which to gnaw."

OF THE three books, Miss Szmaglewska's presents best the graphic details of camp life: the free hours utterly devoted to the search for lice, the acquiring of a canteen of water, of a spoon and bowl; how the living worked and how the sick died. The full impact of its narrative is only slightly weakened by too frequent overwriting with incongruous, romantic phrases. Mr. Weinstock tells the simple story of the experiences in Buchenwald of a Hungarian trade-unionist. Much of its interest derives from its almost casual suggestion of the moral issue involved in the behavior of each individual: to save one's skin or the skin of one's fellow inmates—often in the name of some high political ideal—at the cost of co-operating with the Nazis, or to go blindly, stubbornly, and uncompromisingly to one's death? As a Communist sympathizer, for instance, he was faced with the unappealing fact of Communist tactics. Unfortunately, the problem is only too facily resolved.

David Rousset's *The Other Kingdom*, by a former professor of philosophy in a Paris lycée, is a book of another order. Rousset too seems to have Communist sympathies (though he is reported to be a Trotskyite). But in his case, the sympathies are the springboard from which one plunges into the complex morass of political and individual morality. It is a powerful book—subtle, provocative, and irritating; it sets itself to face the largest problems, as the title of the French original, *L'Univers Concentrationnaire*, was meant to indicate. It is typical, too, of the French intellectual elite of our day: sophisticated in method, sensitive to all shades of meaning, temporizing in its conclusions.

The camps were both a universe and a social order. The SS found it more satisfactory to give the prisoners a certain amount of "self-government," both in the interests of efficiency and of their own indolence. There grew up class distinctions of a new kind between the mass of the prisoners and the block leaders, room orderlies, infirmary attendants, supply-room hands, etc. As Rousset says: "The existence of an aristocracy among the prisoners, enjoying power and privileges and wielding authority, made a unified opposition impossible. Finally, it constituted—and in the con-

centrationary universe this was its sufficient and definite justification—a marvelous instrument of corruption."

Within this system, the struggle for life, and power, took place. It was individual against individual, national group against national group, and, most important of all, the "greens" (German common criminals) against the "reds" (German Communists). Originally, the SS favored the criminals and put them in charge. The Communists planned and organized; they took advantage of divisions within the criminals' ranks; they truckled to the SS, proved themselves far superior as administrators and more useful as lackeys. Murder and terrorism were used by both criminal and Communist alike. By 1942, the Communists controlled the camp apparatus within Buchenwald.

The advantages of power were many and important. The Communists were in a position to give their adherents necessities (food, water, clothing, etc.) and even luxuries (especially tobacco). They could, within limits, decide the all-important question of who was to live and who was not; the blockleaders helped to draw up the lists of those destined for "transportation." With these advantages went responsibilities. In 1943, the SS handed interior police work over to the Communists, who were formed into the *Lagerschutz*. It was their task to herd Jews on to transports, beating them with rubber truncheons.

It is this question of the struggle for power among the prisoners that obsesses Rousset. Yet his description of it is surprisingly barren of factual details. This is partly due to his impressionistic style, and partly, perhaps to the fact that he was saving his material for a much larger work (*Les Jours de Notre Mort*) not yet available in English. Those who wish more details may find them in a much neglected book, *The Dungeon Democracy*, by Christopher Burney (Duell, Sloan, & Pearce, 1946). They may read there of the case of Michelin, the French tire manufacturer, who was arrested for his resistance activities. A man over sixty, he would ordinarily have been exempt from "transport." The Communists, seeing in him only a hated bourgeois, slipped him on to one of the lists—and to his death. They will also get an insight into the mentality of the Communists when they read that two weeks before the Americans liberated Buchenwald, the German Communist leaders held a meeting and formally resolved

"that it is in the highest degree regrettable that the Anglo-American capitalists should liberate us. We will do all in our power, even under them, to retain the position which we have always held."

THE problem that both Rousset and Weinstock raise is: were the Communists justified in their *Realpolitik*? Weinstock answers with a flat affirmative, Rousset with a troubled assent. Weinstock has a long description of Emil Korbach, the Communist leader of the Jewish block. Korbach entered Buchenwald in 1933 at the age of nineteen, and Weinstock's admiring picture of him shows us something very much like the "new barbarians" of Koestler's novels. He was cool, inflexible, dedicated; his policy was to save lives, preferably those lives that he deemed most useful to the world of the future; his method was one of ruthless discipline, brutality—and the sacrifice of lives. The SS had to have its periodic sacrifice; Korbach's mission was to arrange things so that this sacrifice was the least expensive under the circumstances. And, to be sure, least expensive from the Communist point of view.

This, fundamentally, is also Rousset's argument. But Rousset finds it a little difficult to swallow. By what right did the Communists arrogate to themselves the power of life and death? Was it morally permissible for them to assist the SS in their running of the camp? Did they not become tarred with the same brush? His answer receives its clearest formulation in his article published in the July-August issue of *Politics*. It consists of two parts. First, the question cannot be posed abstractly. It was a question of Communist control versus unbridled criminal control, and the former was infinitely preferable. Second, "certain responsibilities are too heavy for individuals' shoulders. We have got to assume them as a group." Those who make use of corruption themselves become corrupted, but with the Communists the fact that they were responsible to a collective authority offered a check and balance.

It was not only for the Communists that this dilemma was posed during the last war. Those Jews who operated the gas chambers at Birkenau—what alternative did they have? Had they refused, they would have been summarily shot, and others found, perhaps non-Jews, to take their place. The Chief Rabbi

of Salonika who had to submit a list of persons to the Gestapo for deportation and death—was his action reprehensible or not? Would it have been better if the Gestapo had shot him outright and sated itself indiscriminately? These were not ethical problems in the old sense of the word, and certainly not as found in text-books of morality—except as fanciful archetypes. Here, there was no genuine alternative except death. Every choice was urgent, crucial, and decisive. Morality was synonymous with suicide, and the fanciful had become the commonplace.

In a sense, this is becoming the morality problem of our epoch. Is it permissible to sacrifice one innocent person in order to save the world? That is the true dimension of the problem—and not only in its theoretical extreme but in its practical immediacy.

But how to answer? The thundering "No!" is easy and absolute, and many religious thinkers have given it for us to see. By fighting the SS on their own level, the Communists recreated themselves in the SS's image. By debasing themselves, the Jews who operated the gas chambers fulfilled the intention of the SS, which was to persuade them that they were inherently evil and rejected from humanity. By showing to the world how weak a creature man is, how susceptible to torture and degradation, "the camps, by the simple fact of their existence, set up in society a destructive nightmare, eternally present and accessible" (Rousset).

WE WISH that the men in Buchenwald had acted differently, that there had been more human cooperation and self-sacrifice. But how would we have acted? What would we have done in the face of the diabolical trap that forced the prisoners to stand roll-call in a space too constricted to hold them all, with the surplus summarily executed? Would we have fought, scratched, kicked, and killed to get into line—before the uproarious belly-laughs of the SS—when the very space our bodies occupied spelled an innocent man's death?

It is only natural and human to be repelled by the Communists' tactics, and to reject their justification. But no partisan verdict can supply an easy conscience. Until we can propose a genuinely felt and honestly conceived moral alternative, we are tarred with the same brush. We can only agree once again with Wilde:

"The brotherhood of man is no mere poet's dream; it is a most depressing and humiliating reality."

Pessimism for Mass Consumption

AN ESSAY ON MORALS. BY PHILIP WYLIE.

New York, Rinehart & Co., 1947. 204 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by CLEMENT GREENBERG

IT IS to the credit of the American way of life that it intends everything and everybody for mass consumption. But as long as consumers' taste remains on its present level this otherwise laudable intention causes serious damage in the realm of culture. Culture for the "masses"—yes. Joy for the "masses"—by all means. But not *all* culture for the "masses"—not yet. The mass digestion has to be prepared. To trim, rationalize, and pre-digest for mass consumption such difficult cultural objects as the fine arts, poetry, and philosophy will at the present moment only mislead where we seek most to enlighten. (Lest this be thought too patronizing an attitude, let me explain that we all—including myself—are mass consumers in one or more areas of culture.)

That democratic assumption which makes the "average" man believe everything to be within his reach has, especially of late, done considerable harm to culture in this country. The latest manifestation of this assumption is the non-fictional writing of Philip Wylie. Who would have dreamed fifty years ago that pessimism could ever be made into an article saleable on the drug store level? Mr. Wylie demonstrates that almost anything can, in principle, be adapted to mass taste. Not that the "masses" will actually read this latest book of his, but we think immediately at the first glance at the first page: who *will* read this book if not they?

MR. WYLIE's earlier work of non-fiction, *Generation of Vipers*, as banal as it finally is, may have had the spark of something valid in its first impulse. At least it was negative. Unfortunately, his new book is positive, and it is a farrago of such arrantly assertive and militant nonsense as the editor of even an American publishing house rarely lets go to the printer. This, perhaps, is what the contemporary village atheist really looks like in print—sad decline of the provincial iconoclast, of the little shoemaker

who used to read Schopenhauer and Nietzsche! Only in this awful age could half-bakedness sink so low, only in this age could such half-bakedness reach print in anything but subsidized editions.

Mr. Wylie claims that man can solve his present difficulties only by freeing his instincts from the domination of the ego. The ego means churches, institutions, Communism, most public issues, etc., etc., all of which man ought to repudiate in order to realize himself and the fact that he is, to start with, only an animal. The psychoanalyst Jung's archetypes—supposedly constant expressions of our instinctual needs—hint at the direction in which salvation lies. Down with almost everything. But for all Mr. Wylie's subversive bluster in the name of the instincts, we discover that Americanism remains intact and that in the end he doesn't even really mean what he says about religion. Everything can be taken back. And in any case Mr. Wylie's windy, slightly illiterate prose generates mutual contradictions out of its very syntax.

This is, among other things, revolution for the timid layman. Without having to go to the bother of making one, he will get the sensation of a revolution from an attitude of violent, insubordinate, and irrelevant assertiveness. The emptier the assertiveness the purer the sensation. But what he will get more than anything else in the end is the sensation, without the difficulty of the actual experience, of having read something profound. Profundity for the masses, too. In the final analysis, if we go by Kant's aesthetics, Mr. Wylie's book has to be considered as a work of art, however low the level of that art—since, according to Kant (and this reviewer agrees with him), art gives one the sensation of a thing without necessarily including its meaning.

BUT I have already taken this book too seriously. The important thing about it is not its absurdity or anything else that pertains to its explicit content. What, aside from its character as a new form of culture for the "masses," makes it worth noticing at all is that it constitutes one more symptom of a dissatisfaction with the quality of contemporary American life that is spreading even to the smuggest and most worldly-successful sectors of our society. *Essay on Morals* is a banal symptom; nevertheless the state of mind it bears witness to is in a historical and sociological context a serious one. When people like Mr. Wylie become bored and anx-

ious, then American culture must indeed be deemed to have lost a good many of its inner resources.

I do not believe that our society's failing ability to allay the anguished boredom of the individuals who compose it can be blamed altogether on the international situation and the threat of the atomic bomb. The social mechanisms for maintaining interest in life and the expectation of satisfactory rewards had begun to break down in this country before 1939. The war may have speeded the process up but it did not initiate it. Conversation had already begun to flag ten years ago; our public pronouncements, our pleasures, our entertainment, our literature and art were already losing their pertinence. Today they seem so radically irrelevant that even people like Mr. Wylie, a writer of popular fiction undistinguished even in its own sphere, have begun to notice it and no longer know how to keep their place. The situation must be even more serious than we realize.

A Lady of Valor

ENCHANTING REBEL: THE SECRET OF ADAH ISAACS MENKEN. By ALLEN LESSER. New York, The Beechhurst Press, 1947. 284 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by SIEGFRIED KRACAUER

IN HIS biography of Adah Isaacs Menken—an American actress who in the middle of the 19th century stirred sensation everywhere between Virginia City (Nevada) and Paris—Allen Lesser tries to penetrate the secret in which this amazing Jewish woman wrapped herself. Driven by human curiosity as well as a genuine interest in stage life, he patiently elicits from old documents, newspapers, theater programs, and photographs the truth behind a legend, or at least that part of the truth which is enclosed in pertinent facts. And since he assembles these facts with literary taste and condoning irony, the result is a lively portrait of an extraordinary creature.

In 1857, Adah, then twenty-two, started her career as an amateur performer with the Crescent Dramatic Association of New Orleans. Her ambition was boundless; and once she was let loose, she soon found out that the less people knew about her the more she could impress them. In her self-dramatization, and while she did not deny her Jewish faith, she

purposefully posed as a Byronic character of mysterious origins—a myth which kindled the imagination of all men-about-town. In reality, she was born Adah Bertha Theodore in a village near New Orleans. And instead of being captured by the Indians as a girl, she spent her childhood in prosaic middle-class surroundings.

The fame she won resulted from her natural gifts rather than consummate acting. When she recognized that she would not do as Lady Macbeth, she resolutely exchanged tragedy for melodrama and Protean farce, playing masculine parts, or exhibiting her bare legs and more. At the beginning of the Civil War she starred as Mazeppa in the play of this title—a Mazeppa who in the first act is stripped, lashed, and bound fast to the back of a horse which gallops away with him. It was a hit, aided by the anathemas of the Puritans. Audiences in New York, San Francisco, and London raved about this triumph of nudity and bravura, and Adah's name was on everyone's lips. In the Paris Théâtre de la Gaité she performed in *Les Pirates de la Savane*, a French melodrama located in Mexico; but the playwrights inserted for her a run on horseback à la Mazeppa, so that the public would not miss the attraction of two continents.

And yet her fame was not entirely unmerited. Mr. Lesser points out that she contributed to the emancipation of the American theater from its European heritage. "Her success led eventually to the development of a new type of musical comedy entertainment which reached its peak in the soubrettes of the Eighties and Nineties." Imitations of her Mazeppa stunt cropped up in many parts of the world, but none of them could outshine hers. She possessed a magnetic quality; not only the indiscriminating multitude, but the old Alexandre Dumas surrendered to her charm, and so did Dickens.

HER life was a series of scandals, interrupted by four marriages which also ended in scandals. When her first husband, Alexander Isaac Menken (from a prominent Jewish family in Cincinnati), lost his money, she talked him into becoming her manager—an affair doomed to failure. Then, wrongly assuming that her rabbinical divorce was legal, she married Tom Heenan, the heavyweight boxing champion of America, who, in the belief that he was being cheated, allowed his lawyer to call her a pros-

titute. She pretended to commit suicide, but soon carried on with more gusto than ever before. Her subsequent husband, a literary editor, blundered in trying to reform this feminine Mazeppa, whereupon she escaped through a window after exactly one week. The fourth and final attempt at domestication did not even last that long.

Married or not, the Menken insatiably consumed what life offered her of friendships, amorous intermezzi, extravagances, and other pleasures. She mingled with the Bohemian set in New York and San Francisco, explored—dressed in male clothing—the infamous Barbary Coast, frequented gambling haunts and spiritualist sessions; and drove through London in a brougham that sparkled with silver-plated nails and gold foliage. Her lovers ranged from shady characters to shining celebrities; one of them was the poet Swinburne, who boasted of his easy conquest with masculine pride and little taste. The newspaper gloated over these goings-on, and Adah saw to it that they had always something to gossip about. What seemed abandon on her part often sprang from an acute sense of publicity. She lavished favors on those who knew how to pull strings, and advertised herself with the ingenuity of a born huckster.

However, in spite of her sham aspirations and staged eccentricities, this amazing woman was by no means devoid of genuine dreams and emotions. Rather, she was a mixture of deceit and sincerity so imperceptibly fused that probably she herself was unable to distinguish between them. No doubt, she really loved the heavyweight champion; and while posing as a suicide, she wrote a despondent farewell letter that could not have been more convincing. Her flimsiness was also a matter of true imagination. Part of her fantasies crystallized in poems inspired by the Bible, Byron, and Walt Whitman. In fact, the Menken was something of a poet. Contributing to *The Israelite* of Cincinnati, the New York *Sunday Mercury*, and other magazines, she reveled in bold images which expressed her preoccupation with death, her despair, and the wild longings of her forever unsatisfied nature. Occasionally, she took flight to more intellectual spheres, challenging orthodox church-goers and the opponents of women's emancipation in essays that had a subversive ring. It was not all gold foliage and mere pretense. Throughout her short life—she was only thirty-three when she

died—she felt attracted by literati, who in turn eagerly sought her company. The young Mark Twain asked her to criticize his sketches, and George Sand, once Chopin's muse, communed with her in impassioned discussions.

Mr. Lesser traces the meteoric career of his heroine without any real inquiry into psychological motives and social background. Who was the Menken? This question continues to intrigue the more inquisitive minds.

It is perhaps not accidental that the Menken prospered at a time when Rachel's triumphs were still alive and Sarah Bernhardt's star was beginning to rise. No one will think of comparing her with these great actresses; but she shared with them the burning desire for blazing a trail through life—an all-devouring intensity which may well have been their common Jewish heritage. Released from the ghetto one or two generations earlier, the Jews strove to assert themselves in a world of mounting industrialism which favored the expression of their long-suppressed energies. This might well account for the intensity with which they developed inner potentialities or seized upon fortuitous chances. But the world into which they emerged proved a sort of vacuum, a place outside the boundaries of fixed values and venerable traditions. As much as they tried to assimilate, they went astray in it, losing foothold, confidence, and discernment. What remained, undiminished, was their intensity, which they now mobilized in the pursuit of the futile as well as the essential. Lie and truth flowed together, and frivolous pleasures were amalgamated with profound feelings. To some extent this was the case with the Menken.

History and Saga

MOSES. By MARTIN BUBER. East and West Library. Oxford and London, 1947. 226 pp. 12/6.

Reviewed by HAROLD ROSENBERG

LIKE Thomas Mann's *Ten Commandments*, Buber's *Moses* is an attempt to reconstruct an image of The Lawgiver as a living individual working to unify the "congeries of clans" that had experienced slavery in Egypt until he led them forth to suffer, reluctantly, freedom and hope in the desert. Except that Buber wants his Moses to be taken as history not fiction.

The only source for a biography of Moses is the Bible, which scholarship classifies as a

saga. And the saga is "generally assumed to be incapable of producing within us any conception of a factual sequence." Buber therefore begins by presenting a theory of the saga, and of the Bible in particular, that will overcome this difficulty through a "deeper insight into the relation between saga or legend and history."

Without being a scholar, it seems to me that in the main there is much to justify Buber's contention that the saga contains a valid experiencing of a vast historical event like the Exodus—though I shall note later my reactions to the concrete results achieved in his *Moses*.

For a group to be taken out of the bowels of the historical situation of another group (the Egyptians) and to begin a history of its own requires a process that far exceeds the political; all the elements of human reality are brought into play. The freeing from slavery—and freeing is just such a detachment from the life of another and beginning of oneself—demands that the slave reject himself as he exists, yet that he be a someone who can assert himself. The negation of the slave past thus depends on the discovery of a deeper past, a past in which what is now divided was a single self.

Since it brings a new historical organism into being, the liberation of a people is accompanied by the tensions of transformation and rebirth. The event takes place on many different levels of experience simultaneously. On the historical surface it is a struggle against the organized power of a state, and relates itself to economic and social conditions. It is also, however, the healing of a wound by the restoration of the slaves to their original humanity, which had never been altogether destroyed in them; though the healing may assume the appearance of a most extreme disease, as every paralyzed nerve reveals its incapacity through being forced to respond to the new flow of life. Freeing is also a moral event, because it always seems to set its road in the direction of the greatest obstacles, so that what has already been lived becomes more seductive to the exact degree that the liberated struggle away from it, and their resolution is constantly undermined by nostalgia and by the desire for an easier way (the fleshpots, the golden calf).

Yet because somehow all inner and external contradictions are eventually overcome—at a

given instant the weakest becoming stronger than the strong, the most disintegrated becoming the most firmly formed, the despised the most austere—a genuine liberation is filled with what Buber calls "historical wonder" and this wonder is "no mere interpretation" but part of the event itself.

THE saga, which preserves the wonder of the event in its rhythm and in its images of grandeur, is therefore the most accurate kind of record of a historical transformation. In the saga the actors in the drama of liberation take on dimensions equivalent to what has been accomplished.

In passing from its earliest form of word-of-mouth recalling of great doings to the written document, the original saga comes to be overlaid with new interpretations; the first recording on the human brain is "rectified" for political, religious, or other motives; new situations and fantasies are dreamed into it. The "seeing" of the primal happening is now concealed under subsequent seeings. The effort to penetrate to "the earliest of all" must therefore follow a procedure somewhat analogous to that of psychoanalysis, the stripping off of layer after layer of later imaginings and reformulations.

Thus, through analyzing the "timing" of phrases in the Biblical saga with the instruments of scholarship, in order to gauge their closeness to the actual happenings, Buber hopes to touch the historical Moses in the main incidents of his life. Convinced that a great deal in the Bible "follows on the events," Buber seeks to distinguish what is "genuine traditional material" in the narrative from pure invention, to tie this material to what is known of contemporaneous Semitic customs and political and geographical conditions, and on this to build an interpretation of what Moses saw, felt, willed, and brought into being.

THE story of Moses, whether or not it be accepted as the story of historical events, is a god story. We have seen that in the "revolution" which freed it from Egypt, Israel had to rediscover a self deeper than the personality it had acquired under chains. It was the role of Moses to be filled with and become the voice of this new-old identity of the Hebrews. And the way this happened in the Bible was that he found again the god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, identified this god as the god of enslaved

Israel, and brought the people to him on the road to Canaan.

This is the story of Moses as we have it. However the personality of Moses be interpreted, the part played by the presence of the single god, or, if one prefers, the god of singularity, is dominant. (This applies also to Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*, which Buber rejects as "regrettable.") At all points Moses is engaged in drawing down into himself and transmitting into events the commands of the Present One. These acts of hearing, obeying, and insisting that others obey the voice of the One must be the point of departure for the "biographer" of Moses whether he writes fiction, psychological analysis, or "history."

Now while Buber claims to be writing history, he accepts the god story as a god story. Each chapter of *Moses* is the uncovering of a stage in the god-relation of the leader—the burning bush, the miracles before Pharaoh, the dividing of the sea, the institution of the Sabbath, to his solitary death on the mountain where "no man knoweth his grave."

Though *Moses* has the form of a scholarly inquiry, it is actually a hymn to the work of fashioning the people of Israel in relation to their god. "Here again [in the celebration of the Sabbath] a great step has been taken towards unifying the people, towards bringing the national community into being; and, once again, by means of an institution which served to gather Israel around their God." Buber's impulse is not the one common to the kind of Bible researchers who wish to pin down a fact regardless of its implications. He aims to discover in the Bible story of Moses a coherent metaphysical adventure, developing through various phases of vision, action moved by faith, and spiritual renewal. Wherever possible he defends the traditional sequence of the Biblical narrative against the arguments of students who would pull the story apart and connect the pieces with other data they have dredged up; and he tries to preserve and deepen the accepted religious meanings of the text.

Does *Moses* thus bring us closer to the "historical nucleus" of the Exodus? Does Buber meet the challenge of Eduard Meyer that no one has been able to depict Moses "as a concrete historical figure"? The question of proof of historical reality is for specialists to decide. As a lay reader it seems to me that what Buber gives us is a philosophical-poetic conception of

Moses, ingeniously contrived of a combination of exegesis, collateral data, and symbolic word play, rather than a historic man and historical events. He adds a metaphysical interpretation to the Bible story as it is; he does not produce a re-telling that would extend into Egypt our understanding of things as they happen in the world.

What is involved in Buber's construction is the assumption that there are two Moseses: one that exists in the Bible story as we have it, and who is seen in a frame of wonder, myth, priestly dogma, fancy, etc. And another Moses who "really existed" behind this story, and who was also wonderful, transcendental, and unique. Now the question is—is it possible to find "in history" (i.e., in the field of data dealt with by historical analysis) a drama of the birth of an identity, like that of freed Israel, in its most intimate, felt progression from nothingness into being? Or is not such a drama by its very nature a "fact" that can only be grasped by poetry, since it is but hinted at by the data which can be shuffled by analytical methods—so that even if those data belonged to our own time and consisted of events happening before our eyes, we could still not say on scientific grounds, such-and-such a historical being is taking form?

In other words, when we are dealing with an initiating event do we not have to choose between the poetic fact, which is an intangible whole of a unique quality, and the historical fact, which exists in an endless system of relations? I believe Buber has chosen the Bible poetry as against the prose of historical reconstruction but that he refuses to admit it, with the result that what he gives us as "history" is what we already have in the Bible, plus exegesis.

To illustrate: the chapter on Moses and Pharaoh, dealing largely with the Plagues, contains an interesting discussion on "the historic function of the *nabi*" as an opponent of rulers and on the role of wonders. But this discussion leaves the Plagues exactly as we find them in the Bible: they occur and Israel is released. We are told that they are "a sign" arising from a "process [which] must indeed be extraordinary, though not necessarily in any way supernatural." But is it an extraordinary coincidence that we are talking about? In that case Moses was deluding himself when he saw "the hand of God" in a series of accidents, and Buber's story should show him to us as a man of per-

sistent hallucinations accompanied by unflinching luck. There are such careers, which we cannot explain, and when we say "luck" we admit this incapacity to interpret a recurrent combination of error and success in terms of our general conceptions of cause and effect. But though he twice disclaims the supernatural, Buber does not take responsibility for a naturalistic interpretation either along the phenomenological lines of a conception of luck or along the lines of a scientific theory of functional relations. Nor does he define any metaphysical force working in history that might have "brought" a train of catastrophes to Egypt resulting in the liberation of the slaves. So we are left with the Bible story and the subjective evasion of the "not necessarily supernatural."

Without setting a perspective of either poetry or science there can be no "re-seeing" of the event.

"May this be a hypothesis," says Buber speaking of his concept of the Decalogue, "it is the only one which affords us what is requisite: namely, to insert a combination of words found in literature into a sequence of events such as would be possible in history."

Following Aristotle, we may say that to deal with what "would be possible in history" is to write poetry rather than history. And indeed what Buber has written is a metaphysical poem, based on the Bible story, of his highest notion of the Man of the World.

IN SUCH an undertaking it seems to me that the presence of the apparatus of scholarship is a drawback. Fiction or straight exegesis, in which the imagination of the author can freely recast what is written in accordance with his vision of the whole, and thus join his own creation to the evolution of the saga in which he believes, would have been more convincing. When one wishes to say things like: "in this way the tragedy of Moses becomes the tragedy inherent in Revelation," the question of form is extremely important, and arguments about sources not only tend to be a distraction but to arouse an intellectual suspiciousness regarding an attempt to determine such matters about the "historical Moses."

The charm of scholarly writing, and what is convincing about it, is precisely its appearance of "neutrality" in linking all reliable data. When this neutral stacking up of facts is given as "what we actually know" about some Biblical or other sacred account, the effect is usually

shocking—but the blandness of the scientific manner of establishing the shocking "fact" makes the effect also comic, as when one demonstrates through comparisons of arboreal deities, statistics on the frequency with which lightning strikes bushes in highlands and valleys, etc., etc., that Jahveh lived in a tree not higher than eight feet. You don't "believe" this in the poetic sense of permitting it to alter the conception of the whole event that lives in your imagination, any more than the logical constructions built in a detective story out of unlikely clues cause you to change your conceptions of probability in actual situations. But you can't disbelieve scientific research either, because it all consists of connections of events and things on the plane of conscious relations. That the scientific historian often finds in sacred literature either a blank or something fantastically unrelated to our conception of spirit lends credence to the integrity of his methods.

Buber's conception of Moses makes too much sense to be supportable as an "objective state of affairs"—I cannot imagine that some of his subtler analyses of The Lawgiver's creativity and divine afflatus would lend themselves to proof. Moreover, his account of Moses' experience is too consistent with his own special philosophy, derived from a criticism of Kierkegaard, of how the subjective ought to fulfill itself in social responsibility and communion; this is a fairly latter-day philosophy to serve as a historical definition of The Prophet. It is, of course, legitimate for a philosopher to find that a great ancestor enacted in life what he, the philosopher, conceives in his mind as an ideal process. But it seems better to state frankly that one is building a myth, though one may contend that it is a myth that reflects the truth. As Socrates says somewhere: this isn't the way it actually is, but if you think of it in this way you're less likely to be wrong than if you have some other notion.

In sum, here is high and beautiful thinking about Moses, though marred by the essential unseriousness of scholarly logic ("No matter when the one passage or the other may have been written down, the spirit of Moses speaks out of both"). It conveys a sense of the human resistance of the prophet to the invisible god by whom he is led; of his living in the expectation of the miraculous; of his finding ritual, communion, and covenant in order to bind the people ever more tightly together through binding their history to the god who "brought them

out of Egypt." It elaborates, too, the anguishing contradiction, represented by the golden calf episode and the revolt of Korah, in Moses' effort to convert the horde of ex-slaves into a "holy people." Buber is uncompromisingly on the side of Moses and holiness. But the statement of the contradiction is a recognition that since The Lawgiver the experience of Israel has cried out: If it is God that saves you, beware! From the point of view of common happiness it might be better not to have been saved at all.

Statesman's Apologia

AUSTRIAN REQUIEM. By KURT VON SCHUSCHNIGG. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1946. 322 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by KURT LIST

FEW apologists are more suspect than retired statesmen explaining their ill-starred political decisions. The consequences being larger, their flights of self-extenuation cover more mileage. At the same time, they so obscure the issues in the mellowing ivy of off-the-record anecdotes that one can hardly depend on what they say.

Against the background of a world war, the forced *Anschluss* of Austria becomes a small incident. But if only for historical purposes, the facts should be gathered and published. To expect these facts from Dr. Schuschnigg, however, would be unfair, since they add up to an ironclad indictment of his own life's work. Yet these facts are not complicated and are well known in Europe. The Austrian Republic, the historically illogical creation of the Peace Treaty of St. Germain, was the football of Central European power politics. Split between the Social-Democrats (who worked for a democratic solution) and the Catholic Christian Social party (Vatican-dominated, quietly anti-Semitic, and reactionary to the core), it staggered from one crisis to another. Relying on its southern neighbor, Fascist Italy, and drawing popular support mainly from the backward rural provinces, the clerical party had as its one aim to break the power of the Socialists, who, in the absence of a liberal movement, were the sole executors of the democratic idea.

In 1927, long before the Nazi danger, the Christian Social government's police actually fired on workers demonstrating against the acquittal of a group of Austrian fascist hoodlums

who had attacked a Socialist parade with fire-arms. The threat of German annexation after Hitler's rise to power was used by this same regime as a bogey against the Socialists. In 1935, the Dollfuss government, in which Dr. Schuschnigg held at different times the ministries of education and justice, was finally able, by means of a bloody *Putsch* in which several thousand Austrian Socialists were killed, to dissolve the Austrian parliament, and establish the authoritarian regime for which the clericalists had worked since 1918. Dr. Schuschnigg was at the very least an accomplice in all this. He became chancellor of the new authoritarian state when the Nazis had murdered Dollfuss, and although he undoubtedly wanted to preserve Austria's independence, he fought the Socialists with the same ruthlessness as his predecessor.

After the *Anschluss* in 1938, Dr. Schuschnigg was arrested and kept imprisoned until the end of the war in various Nazi jails and concentration camps. But the treatment he received was more pleasant by far than that of less prominent anti-Nazis.

AUSTRIAN REQUIEM demonstrates with frightening clarity that experience may sometimes teach a man nothing. Dr. Schuschnigg beclouds the situation rather cleverly by saying that Austria was neither a geographical nor historical concept, but an *idea*. He does not, however, present this "idea" as the incubator of some of the most advanced achievements of the 20th century: Freud's psychoanalysis, Schlick's neo-positivism, Schoenberg's radical music, the functional concept of interior decoration of the Wiener Werkstaette, the advanced analysis of nationalism in the writings of Otto Bauer. It was under the clerical regime that Schlick was murdered by a Nazi student, Freud prevented from teaching at the University, Schoenberg driven to Berlin for the sake of his livelihood, and Otto Bauer severely wounded in the fighting of February 1935—after which he had to flee into Czechoslovakia. Austria may have been an "idea" for Dr. Schuschnigg and his colleagues, but it was an idea hostile to all other ideas in Austria.

Dr. Schuschnigg bases his refusal to found his policy upon collaboration with the democratic West on Hitler's unfriendliness: "Hitler's unchangingly hostile attitude, which kept the German borders closed for any Austrian export,

and the beginning of the rapprochement between Berlin and Rome, left us no choice for action. For reasons of immediate security, we had to incur the inevitable disapproval of Britain. For the moment our calculations seemed to be correct." Today, we know how short that moment was.

On democracy and a possible plebiscite in Austria, Schuschnigg has this to say: "We must avoid the appearance that Vienna had to yield to Berlin, where such a plebiscite had been demanded again and again, and secondly, we could not risk that the proclamation of a plebiscite would be regarded as a failure of the Austrian government to live up to its obligation of keeping Austria in an independent state. Italy and France would certainly regard such a step as an infraction of the peace treaties." Dr. Schuschnigg was less touchy, however, about keeping the peace treaties when he introduced compulsory military service in direct violation of all peace-treaty terms.

Even more revealing is the following passage: "The Austrian government could not afford to hold elections, as the result would have been the very contrary of the policy to which we were bound by the peace treaties, and our independence would have been lost." Yet, while on the one hand he believes that all Austria was full of Nazis, he asserts that "the psychological prerequisite of popular support [for the monarchy] was evident."

Intellectual dishonesty of this sort permeates Schuschnigg's book to the point where he actually falsifies the results of the last democratic elections and allots the Socialists fewer votes than they received. All this, coupled with his still surviving respect for Mussolini, his one-

time great protector, and his admission of the possibility that the intentions of the Austrian Nazi leaders might have been honorable, make it quite obvious that Dr. Schuschnigg rejected, and still rejects, any democratic solution, that he opposed the Nazis mainly for geographical reasons—and is stupid enough to be honest about it.

The whole matter is rather unimportant today except for two points. One: the clerical regime works hard to regain absolute power in Austria and there is no evidence that its present representatives are unlike Dr. Schuschnigg. Two: how inadequate must our modern forms of government be if the fate of six million people could rest in the hands of a man who betrayed such fundamental naiveté at the most crucial junctures of his country's history.

If Dr. Schuschnigg is as objectively innocent as he tries to make us believe—with a disingenuousness that says "possibly I am not innocent"—he could have at least done one thing. In the crucial days between his Berchtesgaden meeting with Hitler on February 12, 1938, and his resignation from the government on March 11, he could have told the Austrian public of the real state of affairs; and having told them that, he could have given them as individuals the right to emigrate and allowed them to export their possessions. By failing to do this, he became an indirect accomplice in the murder of 200,000 Austrian Jews and of countless non-Jewish enemies of Nazism.

It is sad that an American public should be presented with a book that extolls thinly disguised fascist ideas. But it is actually terrifying to note that the jacket of this book was designed by an artist signing himself Cohen.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

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